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THE INFLUENCE OF GRENVILLE

ON

PITT'S FOREIGN POLICY

1787-1798





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## THE INFLUENCE OF GRENVILLE ON PITT'S FOREIGN POLICY, 1787-1798.

### INTRODUCTION.

In discussing the course of the English government during the wars of the French Revolution it has been the custom of historians to credit Pitt with responsibility for the initiation and adoption of each specific point of English policy. Pitt, it is said, was the head of the English government and the English government was Pitt. In minor matters he might defer to his colleagues, but in greater questions of policy his will was supreme and his decision final. In short histories of the period such extreme statements may be excused by the necessity for concise writing, but the tendency to overestimate the importance of Pitt is found also in more extended accounts. It amounts very nearly to an assertion of despotic control by the chief minister and of an entire subordination of the other members of the Cabinet.

In fact, however, Pitt's Cabinet was so organized as to preclude the absolutism of one man. It consisted not of the chief supporters of one fixed line of policy, as is the case today, but of a variety of elements, all of which it was necessary to harmonize by concession and compromise. At least two of the members of the Cabinet, Dundas and Grenville, asserted their authority in their own departments, and were in consequence rather the fellow-ministers of Pitt than his executive agents. Contemporary opinion, indeed, credited Grenville with a greater influence upon the general policy of government and a more complete control of his own department than were exercised by any other of Pitt's colleagues. Lord Muncaster\* is authority for Grenville's independence in outlining foreign policy; Lord Sheffield considered Grenville's "head as a statesman . . . to be at least as good as that of any of His Majesty's ministers,"† and Count Woronzow, the Russian ambassador, told Gouverneur Morris that Grenville

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\* Stanhope, III, 4. † Auckland, III, 371.

was the strongest man in the English Cabinet.\* As less direct evidence may be cited Malmesbury's résumé of the difficulties of temper experienced by Pitt and Grenville in their relations,† and Rose's testimony to the same effect.‡ Of a directly opposite character, but equally to the point, is the picture presented by Stanhope§ of the friendship and intimacy existing between these "two proud and sensitive natures when personal affection was not clouded by differences of political opinion."

In themselves, these and similar isolated assertions of Grenville's influence and of his intimacy with Pitt furnish insufficient proof of the important rôle sustained by Grenville in formulating English foreign policy during the French Revolution. That proof has been unexpectedly supplied by the recent publication in England of the Dropmore manuscripts, embodying a very complete series of "most private" and "most secret" letters between Grenville and English diplomats at foreign posts. It is the purpose of this article, by means of these manuscripts, in connection with the principal memoirs of the time, and with the aid of some few primary authorities, to trace the development and extent of Grenville's influence in foreign policy up to the Napoleonic period. No attempt is here made to outline all of the important events of English diplomacy of the period. Only those episodes are described in which Grenville was an important factor, and these are treated in their chronological order.✓

#### OCCASIONAL INFLUENCE OF GRENVILLE ON FOREIGN POLICY.

1787 TO APRIL, 1791.

William Wyndham Grenville entered upon his Parliamentary career in 1782, when but twenty-two years of age. His first official position was that of chief secretary to his elder brother, Earl Temple, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and with Temple he resigned office in June, 1783, on the accession to power of the short-lived Coalition Ministry. In the July following, George III began those negotiations which in December resulted in Pitt's acceptance of the difficult task of forming a ministry against the will of the majority of the House of Commons. In these negotiations Grenville had an intimate share, though less as an active

\* Morris, II, 95.

† Malmesbury, III, 291ff.

‡ Rose, I, 4. Pitt is stated to have said, "I will teach that proud man [Grenville] that I can do without him."

§ Stanhope, II, 122.



agent than as an intermediary in the discussions between Pitt and Temple upon the policy of the prospective government and the make-up of the Cabinet.\* Under Pitt's government as organized in December, 1783, Grenville filled the position of Paymaster General, while other minor offices were held in succeeding years. The correspondence for this period as given in the Dropmore manuscripts shows very clearly that while Grenville was aiding his kinsman Pitt in every way, he was as yet essentially a subordinate.

Grenville's first service seems to have been the smoothing of difficulties between Pitt and Temple, who had now become Marquis of Buckingham. His importance was, however, rapidly increasing, for the steadiness and caution of his judgment, the coolness of temper that marked his decisions, combined with a conciliatory manner, made him a valuable ally in the daily Parliamentary battle. By 1786, though not a member of the Cabinet, he actually wielded an influence on the conduct of public affairs greater than that of ostensibly more important members of the government.†

It was as an interlude in the routine of customary official duties that Grenville first undertook a diplomatic mission. In the spring of 1787 affairs in Holland had reached a stage where it finally became necessary for Pitt to determine whether or not England should unite with Prussia in repelling the aggressive interference of France. Harris, the English diplomat at The Hague, had been insistent upon more forcible measures by England and more open assistance to the Stadtholder, but Pitt was as yet undecided. In his perplexity he determined to send Grenville as a trusted friend and adviser to report upon the situation in Holland.‡

That Pitt felt the utmost confidence in Grenville's judgment is evinced by the letters passing between them at this juncture,§ while the recognition in other quarters of the extent of Grenville's influence is shown by the correspondence of Harris and others interested in upholding the Stadtholder.||

Pitt gave Grenville a free hand in managing the details of the enterprise. "If," he wrote in forwarding the draft of a memorial to Holland, "you find anything objectionable as it now stands, have no

\* A series of letters between Pitt, Grenville, and Temple. Dropmore, I, 214-220.

† Burges, 68.

‡ Malmesbury, II, 302-307, and Keith, II, 208-218. Grenville's mission was also undertaken for the effect it was likely to have in consolidating the party of the Stadtholder in Holland. At the time it was considered that the strongest proof of the intention of the British government to act with vigor was "the mission of Mr. Grenville, who was supposed to possess, and was known to deserve, the entire confidence of Mr. Pitt." *History of the Late Revolution in the Dutch Republic*, 193.

§ Dropmore, III, 408ff.

|| Letters between Grenville, Harris, and Bentinck. *Ibid.*, 415, 416, 417, 422, 423.

scruple to get Sir James Harris to change it in any manner you think safe, preserving the two general ideas I have just mentioned." \* Grenville found conditions in Holland favorable to intervention and supported with energy the efforts of Harris. He was thus an active participant and agent in formulating those principles that resulted in the Triple Alliance of 1788, and heartily approved the spirited attitude assumed by the English government in its relations with France. † Grenville's services at this crisis were not, however, concluded with the completion of his work in Holland. He returned to London in the middle of August, and the scene of diplomatic action was transferred to Paris, where Eden and Goltz represented England and Prussia. Goltz reported to his government that Eden was not supporting him with energy in the demand made for a cessation of French interference in Holland, and this gave rise to a momentary impression at Berlin that England was not acting in good faith. Though Eden was anti-Prussian in his sympathies, the report was seemingly unjust to him, but it determined Pitt to send him a letter of reproof ‡ and to hurry Grenville to Paris to take charge of the negotiations. Grenville went to Paris "to speak plain, because he [Eden] has not" § spoken plainly, and wrote to Buckingham, who disapproved of his acceptance of the undertaking, that "one of the difficulties on this subject was Eden's want of a competent knowledge of the points in dispute. . . . Another, and perhaps not the least of the two, was the strong bent of his mind to admit the assertions of the French government, however unfounded, and to soften our communications in order to keep back a rupture . . . ." || Grenville set out for Paris on September 21, but before he arrived the rapid march of Prussian troops under the Duke of Brunswick had restored the Prince of Orange to his authority and nearly all of Pitt's demands were already satisfied. In these circumstances Pitt thought that England should ask a guaranty of non-interference from France, rather than enter upon stipulations

\* Pitt to Grenville, August 7, 1787. *Dropmore*, III, 414-415.

† *Court and Cabinets*, I, 319-339.

‡ Smith MSS., p. 357 [Papers of Joseph Smith, private secretary to Pitt after 1787]. Eden was reported at Berlin to have stated in Paris that England was not interested in supporting Prussia's claims to satisfaction in Holland, but merely desired Prussian mediation. Pitt wrote to Eden, Sept. 8, 1787: "The report of it [this speech] may have produced the most serious and, in my opinion, irreparable consequences, if communications since made from hence have not fortunately arrived in time to counteract it." It is noteworthy, as illustrating the caution with which memoirs and letters compiled by interested partisans or relatives must be taken, that the portion of this letter containing Pitt's reproof is wholly omitted in the Auckland *Correspondence* without any indication of the elision.

§ Buckingham to Grenville, Sept. 20, 1787. *Dropmore*, I, 283.

|| Grenville to Buckingham, Sept. 19, 1787. *Court and Cabinets*, I, 326-327.



for a settlement in Holland.\* Grenville opposed this, and wrote at length to Pitt, stating his reasons for preferring to any guaranty a silent acquiescence by France in the events in Holland.† Harris, the foremost manipulator for England in the intrigues at The Hague, strongly urged a guaranty,‡ while Eden, still friendly to France, thought the time was ripe for establishing an alliance between England, France, and Spain.§ Before Grenville's letter could reach England, Pitt had come to a similar opinion in favor of silent acquiescence.||

Grenville, having satisfied himself that France would accept such a settlement, asked and obtained leave to return to London, leaving the formal conclusion in the hands of Eden. Negotiations were closed October 27 by the signing at Paris of a declaration and counter-declaration,¶ in which the French government stated that it had not had and did not have any idea of interfering in Holland, and agreed with England to a disarmament. It was the exact result desired by Grenville. He had not brought Pitt to this conclusion, for both had separately reached the same opinion, but probably the incident still further increased the confidence felt by Pitt in Grenville's judgment. The letters between the two at this period are remarkable for their tone of sincere friendship and confidential intimacy. They are rather familiar letters of conference than diplomatic instructions, and are in marked contrast to the letters passing between Pitt and other diplomatic agents. Two days after Grenville left London on his journey to Paris, Pitt had written in regard to foreign complications: "Let me know what you think of all this. Even in these two days I feel no small difference in not being able to have your opinion on things as they arise." \*\* Harris, Eden, and others interested in these negotiations noted Grenville's aptitude for diplomacy, and were not slow to express their appreciation of his influence and their admiration for his intelligence.

As yet, however, Grenville was not a member of the Cabinet, nor is it to be understood that he was always consulted on questions of foreign policy. His activities were principally directed toward the details of Parliamentary management, and in January, 1789, his services in this field were rewarded by election to the speakership of the Commons. During the regency crisis of 1788-1789 Grenville vigorously supported

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\* Pitt to Grenville, Sept. 23, 1787. Dropmore, III, 428.

† Grenville to Pitt, Sept. 27, 1787. *Ibid.*, 431.

‡ Harris to Grenville, Oct. 5, 1787. *Ibid.*, 437.

§ Eden to Grenville, Oct. 10 and Dec. 6, 1787. *Ibid.*, 438, 440. Also Eden to Pitt, Oct. 10, 1787. Auckland, I, 219.

¶ Pitt to Grenville, Sept. 28, 1787. Dropmore, III, 434.

|| For text see *Parliamentary History*, XXVI, 1264.

\*\* Pitt to Grenville, Sept. 23, 1787. Dropmore, III, 429.

Pitt in the determination to make no compromise with the opposition and was particularly efficient in influencing his brother, Buckingham, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to conduct affairs there in such a manner as not to embarrass the English ministry.\* The occupancy of the speakership was brief, for on June 5, 1789, Addington became Speaker, while Grenville took up the position and duties of Secretary of State for the Home Department.† He was now a full-fledged member of the Cabinet, with an important department of public business within his own personal control, yet Pitt still found occasion to use him in connection with foreign complications. In the Nootka Sound controversy with Spain it was Grenville who corresponded directly with Eden, now become Baron Auckland, who was the English minister at The Hague, with the view to obtaining information from the Dutch as to the readiness of Spain and France for war and to securing Dutch assistance under the terms of the Triple Alliance.‡

Grenville's intimate knowledge of details of foreign policy and the great degree of confidence reposed in him are brought out even more clearly in connection with another episode relating to this controversy with Spain. France was bound by the Family Compact to support Spain if war took place. In order to prevent such support Pitt, using Italian diplomacy not customary with him, sent Hugh Elliot and Miles to propose secretly to Mirabeau an alliance with England. This negotiation was kept entirely out of the Foreign Office. Miles's share in it apparently was not known either by Lord Gower, the English ambassador at Paris, or by the members of the Cabinet in England. All documents relating to it, whether in the letters of Elliot, Miles, or Pitt, were suppressed, and the sole source of information in regard to it is in the later statements of the persons interested. It is certain that Pitt merely used Elliot and Miles to avert French interference, and that Miles at least was ignorant that Pitt was not in earnest in the proposals

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\* Buckingham was opposed to summoning the Irish Parliament for January, 1789, but yielded to Grenville's advice, and later recalled a letter of resignation which Grenville, urging a reconsideration, had withheld. Dropmore, I, 411ff. Grenville also influenced Buckingham to refuse to transmit to England the address of the Irish Parliament requesting the Prince of Wales to assume the regency of Ireland. Bernard to Grenville, Feb. 21, 1789. *Ibid.*, 417.

† Grenville succeeded Sydney in the Home Department. The change had been decided on a year previous, but had been delayed by circumstances connected with Buckingham's control of the county represented by Grenville in Parliament. Grenville's letter of acceptance at this time exhibits him as still in a subordinate position: "In being allowed to look forward to this object at the beginning of the next session, I feel I am placed much beyond what I had any right or pretension to look to; and that in the interim I shall only be desirous to give any assistance which may be in my power, on every occasion on which it can be of service." Grenville to Pitt, June 11, 1788. *Ibid.*, 335.

‡ Auckland to Grenville, May 15 and June 8, 1790. *Ibid.*, 585, 588.

made. In spite of the great secrecy maintained in the entire conduct of the negotiation, Grenville was unquestionably informed of it and was known by Miles to be so informed, for the latter on two occasions wrote to Buckingham, evidently with the purpose of influencing Grenville, urging an actual alliance with France. Grenville's knowledge of this incident of Pitt's diplomacy—an incident of which even the Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, the Duke of Leeds, was ignorant at the time—is most positive proof of Pitt's confidence in his advice.\*

Grenville's influence on foreign policy was in fact steadily increasing, and in another direction also was being exerted without the knowledge of the nominal head of the Foreign Office, the Duke of Leeds. A new commercial treaty was being negotiated with Holland, and Pitt had chosen to take this out of the hands of Leeds in order apparently to conduct the details himself. In reality he had transferred the whole matter to Grenville, with whom the idea had originated,† and whose familiarity with Dutch affairs, acquired by his mission in 1787, fitted him to deal with what proved to be a most difficult and intricate problem. After July, 1790, Grenville was in constant and secret correspondence with Auckland in regard to the details of this treaty,‡ and when finally, in January, 1791, these had been formulated in a preliminary draft, Pitt took the precaution to send them through the

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\* Miles to Buckingham, Dec. 13, 1790. Miles, I, 178. Miles is the chief authority for this negotiation, but as a friend of the French Revolution and ignorant of Pitt's duplicity, his entire thesis is that Pitt in 1790 was on the point of making a friendly alliance with France, and thus of safely guiding France through the dangers of revolution. Neither the letters of Hugh Elliot nor of Miles for this period were to be found by their biographers, nor can any statement by Elliot be found, save a very meager one in Morris (II, 256) to the effect that an alliance was actually proposed. Bourgoing gives no hint of Elliot's mission, while Sorel briefly describes it as merely to convince French leaders that England sincerely desired peace. Pitt's real purpose and secret plan is, however, revealed in a letter from the King, included in the papers of Joseph Smith, Pitt's private secretary. "From a thorough conviction how essential Peace is to the Prosperity of this Country it is impossible for me to object to any means that may have a chance of effecting it; though not sanguine that Mr. H. Elliot and his French Friend [Mirabeau] are likely to succeed where caution and much delicacy are necessary. While our Ambassador and Official Correspondence are kept clear of this business, it will certainly be wise to keep up the proposed Communication for the sole purpose of restoring peace, but no encouragement must be given to forwarding the internal Views of the democratical Party. We have honourably not meddled with the internal dissensions of France, and no object ought to drive us from that honourable ground." George III to Pitt, Oct. 26, 1790. Smith MSS., p. 368.

Oscar Browning's *Despatches of Earl Gower* proves that Gower knew of the friendly advances made by Elliot to Mirabeau, and hence that Leeds was also aware that Elliot was being employed by Pitt, but no hint is given of Miles's activities. Despatches of Oct. 22 and Oct. 26, 1790, pp. 38, 40.

† Dundas to Grenville, Sept. 2, 1787. Dropmore, III, 419.

‡ Pitt to Grenville, July, 1790, and Grenville to Auckland, July-August, 1790. *Ibid.*, I, 597, 598.



English Foreign Office in such a manner as to prevent Leeds's knowledge of Grenville's authorship.\* Leeds was in fact rapidly becoming a mere figurehead in English diplomacy. Pitt more and more exercised a direct supervision, leaning the while on the advice of Grenville.

It was while engaged in this negotiation with Holland that Grenville consented to an arrangement which, in the opinion of many of his friends, involved a distinct sacrifice of his political future. On November 25, 1790, he was created Baron Grenville, and was transferred to the House of Lords. Personally he was not averse to the change, and politically he rendered a great service to Pitt, who did not possess in the upper house a single supporter of ability upon whose fidelity he could rely.† Grenville was admirably suited to the place and at once assumed the leadership of that majority of mediocrity always at Pitt's service in the House of Lords. As it proved, he was considerably advanced in political importance by the change. Each departure in governmental policy, each serious defense against the attacks of the opposition, was made in the Commons by Pitt, in the Lords by Grenville. Both spoke for the government with the voice of authority, while Grenville was listened to with an increased attention. Auckland in particular was quick to express his sense of the much greater influence now likely to be wielded by Grenville, and sought to establish an intimacy that might be used in thwarting what seemed to him an ill-considered and dangerous scheme of foreign policy. The time was now at hand in fact when Grenville was to enter formally upon his long tenure of office as Foreign Secretary, in which his influence was to be no longer occasional and concealed, but constant and direct.

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\* Pitt wrote to Grenville, Jan. 11, 1791, referring to the draft sent him by Grenville: " . . . I am satisfied that in substance your proposal is the best that can be made. I have suggested some alteration as to the form which I wish you to consider and to dispose of as you think best. . . . I see no possibility of conveying this to the office without its being known that you have been chiefly concerned in the manufacture. I have thought that the best way of avoiding any difficulty on that account was to send a letter to the Duke of Leeds, which Smith can seal and forward with the draft." *Dropmore*, II, 12.

† Pitt to his mother, Nov. 24, 1790. *Stanhope*, II, 74. Thurlow had already begun to evince the sullen temper which ultimately caused Pitt to remove him from the chancellorship.

## RUSSIAN ARMAMENT OF 1791 AND RUPTURE OF TRIPLE ALLIANCE.

When in 1788 the Triple Alliance had been signed between Holland, England, and Prussia, it was understood that a check was to be put upon the ambitious designs of Russia and Austria in Turkey and of Austria in Germany. Pitt in fact regarded the alliance as an instrument suited to maintain the existing balance, and saw in this the best interests of both England and Prussia. Yet by 1790 it became evident that Frederick William II had schemes of aggrandizement for his country. His diplomats busied themselves in intrigues, planning a revolution in Galicia and sustaining a similar movement in Belgium; signing secret treaties with the Turks, then at war with Austria and Russia; proposing a Polish cession of Danzig and Thorn to Prussia; and encouraging Gustavus III of Sweden in his attack upon Catherine II. The Prussian diplomacy failed in every direction and the Prussian ministers found themselves confined to only two points of their wider intrigues—the limitation, if possible, of Austrian annexations, and the manipulation of the terms of the treaty of peace to be signed between Russia and Turkey. But in this latter plan, since England and Prussia were agreed to prevent any acquisition of territory by Russia, Frederick William II saw the opportunity of saving his prestige in the diplomatic field and of drawing a distinct benefit from the Triple Alliance.\* He therefore urged the English government to act with him in bringing pressure to bear upon Russia, and to this Pitt at first agreed.

At the opening of the negotiations with Russia in September, 1790, the instructions of Leeds to Whitworth, the English representative at St. Petersburg, ordered him to insist on a restoration of the *status quo ante bellum* and went so far as to threaten an English-Turkish alliance if this was not conceded.† Catherine II, however, was determined not to make peace without some acquisition of territory, and fixed upon the fortress of Ochakov with the surrounding district as the least price at which she would discontinue war. Moreover, Pitt's supporters were not united in favor of an anti-Russian policy. As early as December, 1790, Auckland, who was throughout his career an advocate of a peaceful diplomacy for England, began to interject in his letters to Grenville arguments against the project of a Russian war. In this he was earnestly supported by Van der Spiegel, the Grand Pensionary of Holland; for Holland by the terms of the Triple Alliance seemed likely to be drawn into a contest in which she had no real interest. Auckland's first letter to Grenville on this topic was

\* Sorel, II, 154-155.

† See Pitt's speech in the Commons, March 29, 1791. *Parl. Hist.*, XXIX, 52-55, 70-75; also Lecky, V, 292.

apparently in reply to a request by Grenville for information,\* and after this opening had been presented, Auckland, in nearly every letter, up to the actual change in English policy in April, 1791, continued to supply arguments for peace.† Moreover, he took advantage of the necessity of corresponding with Pitt on the commercial treaty then being negotiated between Holland and England to emphasize his objections to the policy about to be pursued,‡ writing to Grenville by the same mail: "I have addressed to Mr. Pitt the answer which I wished to write to your letter from Holwood, and as happily for both of you and for the public, whatever is written to one may be considered as written to the other, I will not detain the packet." §

Yet Grenville was in no sense attempting to influence Pitt by indirect means. Auckland was entirely correct in supposing that it made no difference to whom his letters were addressed, for they were certain to be read by both men. Grenville was in fact convinced of the inadvisability of pushing Russia to extremes, and was trying to bring Pitt to the same conclusion; yet he was so loyal to his chief as to give Auckland no hint of his own sentiments. On March 5 Auckland, who had just received a strong letter from Burges,|| an Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, urging increased efforts to procure effective Dutch armaments, wrote to Grenville: "I have collected with concern from your silence . . . that my sentiments and those of the Grand Pensionary have not the good fortune to be approved by you." ¶

A few days later this judgment seemed premature, for on March 7 Pitt addressed a private letter to Auckland asking for specific information on the importance of Ochakov, information which Auckland hastened to give, quoting Kingsbergen, the Dutch admiral, as authority for his statements of the small importance of the district in question.\*\* In spite, therefore, of a savage letter from Burges threatening investigation and censure for his indifference,†† Auckland was sufficiently hopeful to write to Keith at Sistovo, hinting at a probable change in English policy.‡‡

In reality, however, Pitt had not as yet decided to yield to the advice of Grenville and Auckland, though he was becoming less firm in his determination to risk a war with Russia. The instructions to

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\* Auckland to Grenville, Dec. 31, 1790. Dropmore, I, 612.

† Auckland to Grenville, Feb. and March, 1791. *Ibid.*, II, 31, 32, 33

‡ Auckland to Pitt, Feb. 2, 1791. *Ibid.*, 23.

§ Auckland to Grenville, Feb. 2, 1791. *Ibid.*, 25.

|| Burges to Auckland, March 1, 1791. Burges, 160.

¶ Dropmore, II, 38.

\*\* Pitt to Auckland, March 7, 1791. Auckland, II, 382.

†† Burges to Auckland, March 21, 1791. Burges, 163.

‡‡ Auckland to Keith, March 24, 1791. Keith, II, 394.



English diplomats still breathed the language of firmness, and on March 27 an ultimatum to be addressed to Catherine II was sent to Whitworth at St. Petersburg.\* The arguments hitherto advanced against armed intervention had turned upon the dubious delay of Leopold II in making peace with the Turks at Sistovo,† the danger of war to English commerce, and the uselessness of Ochakov to Russia, even if acquired. These were now greatly strengthened by the evident dislike of England for the war and the rapid lessening of Pitt's majority in the Commons.‡ Grenville returned to the attack, and on April 16, three weeks after the sending of the ultimatum to Russia, an instruction was read to the Cabinet recalling it before delivery. Leeds, refusing to sign the paper, retired from the Cabinet,§ and Grenville at once took up the responsibilities of the office, though not formally assuming the title of Secretary of State for the Foreign Department until June 8.

The new régime in England was immediately manifested in the increased activity of English diplomats on the continent. Keith, who was watching English interests in the wearisome negotiations for an Austro-Turkish peace at Sistovo, received definite instructions.|| Auckland concerted with the Dutch government measures to secure Austria's

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\* Koch, XIV, 500-503.

† The quibbling of Leopold's diplomats in the negotiations at Sistovo has not usually been cited as a cause of Pitt's change of policy; yet Auckland wrote to Keith on March 24, 1791: "I have strong hopes that the incomprehensible conduct of Leopold, to which I allude, will tend to prevent the breaking out of new wars in Europe and in its effects to a general pacification sooner than was expected. I will take occasion to explain this by the first safe conveyance." Keith, II, 394.

‡ Various reasons have been asserted for Pitt's sudden face-about. Stanhope (II, 115-118) ascribes it entirely to the lack of support in the country and in Parliament, and quotes Pitt's letter to Ewart, May 24, 1791: "To speak plainly, the obvious effect of our persisting would have been to risk the existence of the present government, and with it the whole of our system both at home and abroad." Sorel (II, 204-208) adopts the same view and adds the information that the rapid development of public opposition was due to the energy of the Russian envoy in London, Rostopchine, who busied himself in the distribution of articles, handbills, and monographs, and subsidized crowds to protest against the war. Bourgoing (I, 294-298) briefly mentions Grenville's opposition, and states that this was based mainly on his anxiety over the menacing state of France and the fear of a spread of revolutionary principles, an idea clearly disproved by the Dropmore MSS. On the other hand, Malmesbury (II, 441) wrote on October 14, 1791, to Portland: "It appears very clear to me, from some confidential communications which were made to me, that Lord Grenville was the cause of Mr. Pitt's giving way, and that he acted not from the reason which was given, the nation's being against it, but from its being his fixed opinion that we should not interfere at all in the affairs of the Continent." The correct view seems to be that Pitt was weakened in his opinion by the attacks of Grenville, and that the ill-will of Parliament furnished the last and convincing argument.

§ Leeds's account was that on refusing to sign the new instructions, he suggested that Grenville do so, thus indicating his knowledge of the person chiefly responsible for the change. *Political Memoranda of the Duke of Leeds*, 156-158.

|| From December, 1790, to May, 1791, Keith had not had a line from Leeds. He was rejoiced, therefore, at the vigor with which Grenville took up the duties of his office. Keith, II, 418, 423.

friendship. A new negotiator, Fawkener, was despatched to St. Petersburg, and Ewart, who had been absent on leave in London, was hurried back to Berlin. [It now became the purpose of English diplomacy to secure favorable terms for the Ottoman government, if possible, but if Catherine II proved obdurate, to acquiesce in a Russian acquisition of territory. In this connection England's relations with her ally, Prussia, were of the first moment. Ewart's instructions were : first, to forward an English-Austrian-Prussian alliance with the view of forcing Russia to make peace with the Turks on the basis of the *status quo* existing before the war ; second, if this failed, to "unite with the allies in requiring that the territory between the Bog and the Dniester . . . be reduced to the state of a desert" ; third, if Austria refused to join, to consent to a cession of a part of the district of Ochakov to Russia, "provided both banks of the Dniester be preserved to the Porte." \* These instructions, then, still looked toward some limitation upon the demands of Russia. In this spirit they were cordially accepted † by the Prussian King, to whom Ewart had been instructed to appeal personally. ‡ In fact, Frederick William II had just been informed by Leopold II of the possibility of a friendly alliance with Austria and had consented to opening negotiations through Bischofswerder. § Grenville, on being informed of this opening, sent Elgin to Italy, where the Emperor then was, offering in effect admission to the Triple Alliance.

The purpose of both England and Prussia was to isolate Russia, and so force her to yield in the projected treaty with the Turks, but the result was exactly the reverse. The Polish *coup d'état* of May 3, 1791, neutralized the friendly advances of Austria, while Elgin's disclosures convinced Leopold II that under no circumstances would England undertake a war. Acting upon this belief, Austria drew nearer to her late ally, Russia, and increased her demands at Sistovo. || Grenville was in truth determined not to risk a war, and although Parliament as yet knew nothing of the change of policy, ¶ he was instructing Ewart that "in the case of a total rejection of all modifications of the *status quo*,

\* Memorandum by Ewart. Dropmore, II, 49.

† Ewart to Pitt and Ewart to Auckland, April 30, 1791 ; Ewart to Grenville, May 13, 1791. *Ibid.*, 61, 68, 73.

‡ Grenville to Auckland, April 19, 1791. *Ibid.*, 51.

§ For a general discussion of these negotiations see Sybel, I, 274-297.

|| Sorel, II, 222 ; Sybel, I, 295 ; Keith, II, 436. Keith wrote to Grenville on June 9, 1791, the day of the seeming disruption of the conference at Sistovo : "Certain it is . . . that from the moment Prince Kaunitz could form a tolerable guess respecting the objects of Lord Elgin's last journey, he redoubled the haughtiness and inflexibility of his instructions to Baron Herbert."

¶ As late as May 9, Grenville was still asserting in the House of Lords the necessity of British preparation for a war with Russia. *Parl. Hist.*, XXIX, 435. Pitt kept up the pretense much later in the House of Commons.



· · · · it would still be desirable that the Turks should conclude on this basis, and look for their future security to the guarantees of other powers · · · ·” \* For the same reason Grenville refused to prepare a fleet for the Black Sea, a measure strongly urged by Prussia, † and a little later definitely destroyed Frederick William’s hopes of ever obtaining any benefit from the Triple Alliance by his answer to a request for aid in case war should ensue between Prussia and Austria. War did not indeed appear imminent, although the momentary friction between Prussia and Austria, due to the unexpected revolution in Poland, had cast a decided shadow on the previous friendly approaches. In answer to the Prussian inquiry, Grenville wrote to Ewart on July 6 : “ I will freely own to you that I entertain a strong persuasion that matters will not come to extremities with the Emperor. · · · · It is a painful situation to be measuring one’s expressions between the fear, on one hand, of holding out expectations to Prussia which *we could* not perform and *others would* not, and on the other hand of conveying an impression disadvantageous to our national good faith. The whole of our line is summed up in a few words. His Majesty’s present servants will certainly advise him at all risks to perform the engagements of his alliance, if the case exists ; but there is every reason in the situation of this country, and quite independent of any motive personal to ourselves, to wish that the case may not exist. We can answer for our conduct, but we can not answer for our success.” ‡ It is evident that this communication was intended to convey an argument similar to that previously used by Pitt in withdrawing from the proposed English-Prussian ultimatum to Russia, § namely, that to give the support asked for would result in driving Pitt’s ministry from office, and that with the return of the opposition to power the system of the allies would fall to the ground. The repetition of this argument, now used in an entirely new connection, could not fail further to impress Frederick William II with the valuelessness of the Triple Alliance to Prussia. Grenville was right in thinking the danger of war remote, but the incident had not been used to England’s advantage, and it assisted the Austrian party at Berlin in inclining the King toward an Austrian alliance.

The stubbornness of Catherine II and the diplomatic ability of Leopold were more than a match for the poorly combined efforts of England and Prussia. Leopold dallied with the Prussian proposals and

\* Grenville to Ewart, May 24, 1791. Dropmore, II, 78. ✓

† Ewart to Grenville, May 17, 1791. *Ibid.*, 74 ; Lecky, V, 294.

‡ Dropmore, II, 124.

§ Lecky, V, 293, and see *ante*, p. 13, foot-note †.

increased his demands at Sistovo until it was certain that Russia would secure a satisfactory peace. The English and Prussian diplomats at St. Petersburg with little delay yielded to the inevitable, and on July 22 signed an agreement acquiescing in the terms fixed by Catherine II and even pledging that pressure would be brought to bear upon Turkey to enforce their acceptance.\* A little later the discussions at Sistovo were resumed and here also little difficulty was encountered in reaching a conclusion, though one more favorable to Austria than had at first been intended.† In the meantime, Frederick William's disgust with English diplomacy had resulted in pushing him into a hastily conceived alliance with Austria. On July 25 the Vienna Convention was signed by Bischofswerder and Kaunitz for their respective states.‡ Grenville had hoped to bring Austria into the system of the Triple Alliance, and to isolate Russia, and even after it became evident that Russia could not be coerced, he looked to the realization of his project and urged Ewart to press it upon the court of Berlin.§ Auckland had written of this alliance: "I think it eligible for the Emperor, and highly eligible for us, but it seems to be evidently against the Prussian interests,"|| but Grenville in reply stated: "and yet even to his [the King of Prussia's] interests rightly understood, a system of peace and a security for the continuance of the present state of power in Europe would surely be beneficial; and such I conceive would be the effects of this scheme, supposing it to succeed to our most sanguine expectations."¶ Grenville's hopes were soon dashed to the ground. An alliance was signed, but England was not a party to it and found herself powerless to prevent it. "The Vienna Convention," wrote Grenville, "is ratified. We have thought it infinitely the best way to take the thing with a good grace, keeping ourselves out of the complicated difficulties into which His Prussian Majesty is plunging himself."\*\* Yet the reverse to English diplomacy was unmistakable, and every Englishman acquainted with the situation must have agreed with Auckland in the statement that "it is impossible not to feel to private conviction that the alliance between Austria and Prussia suspends in a great degree the cordiality and, in some measure, the effect of our alliance with the latter."††

\* Koch, XIV, 500-503. Prussia disclaimed any responsibility for the treaty, but did not disavow Goltz, her representative at St. Petersburg, who had signed it.

† Keith to Grenville, Aug. 4, 1791. Keith, II, 469.

‡ Koch, IV, 186; Sorel, II, 236-239; Sybel, I, 301ff. The Vienna Convention was preliminary to the definitive treaty of Berlin, Feb. 7, 1792.

§ Grenville to Ewart, July 26, 1791. Dropmore, II, 141.

|| Auckland to Grenville, July 13, 1791. *Ibid.*, 129.

¶ Grenville to Auckland, July 22, 1791. *Ibid.*, 135.

\*\* Grenville to Auckland, Aug. 26, 1791. *Ibid.*, 177.

†† Auckland to Grenville, Aug. 31, 1791. *Ibid.*, 180.

England, not Russia, was isolated by the outcome of Grenville's first efforts as the head of the Foreign Office. He alone directed the diplomacy of England during the negotiations,\* but he alone was not responsible, for Pitt was his steadfast supporter in the Cabinet, agreeing perfectly in the necessity for each step taken. Pitt indeed made light of the diminution of English influence, though he thought the result not very creditable.† Other Englishmen, and in particular English diplomats, were more bitter in their expressions. Keith, while refusing to criticize his government, deplored England's isolation.‡ Malmesbury was vexed with English supineness, and pointed out to his political friends the opportunity for harassing the ministry.§ Ewart was embittered at the overthrow of the diplomatic structure he had been so largely instrumental in building, and could not find words harsh enough to characterize Grenville's policy.|| Other rulers than those directly concerned regarded England as withdrawing from the theater of European politics.¶ These judgments were not unfounded. The first six months of Grenville's diplomacy had, in truth, resulted in failure, and the Triple Alliance ceased to be a factor in European politics. It was fortunate for the reputation of Grenville and for the continuance of his influence in English foreign policy that the wars of the French Revolution nullified every diplomatic prophecy and, creating

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\* Burges wrote to Ewart May 6, 1791: "Our foreign politics . . . are solely and exclusively those of Lord Grenville's. . . . By everything I can see, His Lordship is very rapidly gaining a preëminence which promises to place him much higher than any one at present suspects. . . . Pitt gives way to him in a manner very extraordinary. . . . One prime cause of the sudden turn we have experienced was owing to the influence of Lord Grenville." Burges, 172. Up to April, 1791, Pitt had kept up personal communication with English diplomats. After that date, such interchange of letters almost entirely ceased. Everything now passed through Grenville.

† Pitt to Rose, Aug. 10, 1791. Rose, I, 110.

‡ Keith felt the humiliation of his position at Vienna. February 4, 1792, he wrote Grenville: "A man in my situation, who is carefully debarred by the Austrian ministry from the smallest share in their secrets, has a very difficult task . . . ." Keith, II, 498.

§ Malmesbury to Portland, Oct. 14, 1791. Malmesbury, II, 440.

|| During the progress of the negotiations, Ewart wrote to Keith, June 18, 1791: ". . . What a dreadful change has taken place! Our influence was all-powerful as long as it was maintained with the necessary vigor; and the moment we flinched all the Powers, as if by common consent, turned the tables upon us, and from having had the certainty of restoring peace in our power, there seems now to be the greatest wish of a general confusion. . . . It is impossible to suffer greater mortification than I do at this moment. . . . The Empress of Russia and Potemkin are striving who can throw most ridicule on England and on our ministers at Petersburg. Their evident intention is to gain time, and to push their operations on the Black Sea. Oh! how my blood boils, my dear sir!" Keith, II, 447.

¶ Gustavus III to Baron d'Armfelt, June 16, 1791: "Tout ce qu'on me mande d'Angleterre me prouve ses embarras et sert à me convaincre qu'elle ne met aucune suite dans sa politique extérieure." Gustave III, V, 212.



new and unaccustomed combinations, saved England from the fruits of his errors. But neither Grenville nor any other English diplomat with whom he corresponded foresaw this change or counted upon it.

The humiliation resulting from the negotiations at St. Petersburg would seem to have been sufficient ground for Pitt's resuming that direct control of foreign policy which he had been accustomed to exercise while Leeds was in office. There is no evidence, however, that he was in any way distrustful of Grenville's ability or inclined to exercise his authority. On the contrary, such indirect evidence as exists tends to show a complete control by Grenville of his special department. Under Leeds's administration Pitt had been in constant personal communication with English diplomats at foreign courts, receiving letters from them that should have been written to Leeds, and returning private answers that should have gone through the Foreign Office. On one occasion, when Leeds had offered Keith the choice between withdrawing what he considered an insulting letter or being recalled from Vienna, Pitt had forced Leeds to retract this threat and had gratified Keith with marks of honor and increased pay.\* Under Grenville, Pitt in general ceased to write directly to the English diplomats, and in but one notable instance, to be considered later, did he attempt to conduct an indirect correspondence with an English agent who was nominally acting under instructions from the department of foreign affairs.

In his relations with his subordinates Grenville knew his rights and assumed them without opposition. The recall of Ewart well illustrates this; for Ewart, more than any other, had created the English influence at Berlin which permitted the realization of Pitt's most brilliant stroke of diplomacy, the formation of the Triple Alliance. Yet Grenville recalled Ewart in October, 1791, unjustly, though not openly, making him responsible for the failure of the Russian negotiation, retired him on a pension, and after his death sent an agent to seize his papers, fearing disclosures embarrassing to the government and to the prestige of the foreign department if these papers became public. When Ewart was recalled Pitt did not try to prevent the unmerited disgrace of a faithful servant, and Ewart himself recognized the futility of an

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\* A series of letters from Keith to Leeds and to Pitt from April, 1788, to November, 1789, discloses a conflict between Keith and Leeds illustrative both of Pitt's control and of Leeds's carelessness. Keith complained in an official letter to the Foreign Office of having been kept in ignorance of the project of the Triple Alliance, and even of having received instructions from Leeds which, if carried out, would have been directly opposed to that project. He demanded that his letter be placed on file. Leeds returned it, and gave Keith the option of withdrawing the letter or resigning. Keith sent the letter back again, and traveled to London to appeal to Pitt, who sustained him in the controversy. Keith, II, 225-248.

appeal to the Prime Minister.\* In the letters passing directly between Grenville and his chief there is no mention whatever of those details of administration with which Pitt busied himself while Leeds was his Foreign Secretary. Such letters are indeed infrequent, and wherever occurring are concerned with general questions of foreign policy. Grenville understood the dignity of his position and his rights in personal control, while Pitt was well content to shift the burden of petty management to responsible shoulders.

#### WAR WITH FRANCE—THE MANIFESTO AND THE TOULON DECLARATION.

OCTOBER TO NOVEMBER, 1793.

Since midsummer of 1791 no great question of foreign policy had arisen to excite the interest of Englishmen or to test the comparative control of Pitt and Grenville. Gradually attention was centering on the threatening cloud from France that endangered England's neutrality. The events of the 10th of August, 1792, long prophesied, yet unexpected after all, momentarily threw into confusion British governmental circles, and incidentally furnished an illustration of the degree of dependence now felt by Pitt in the management of foreign affairs. Grenville was absent from London upon his wedding journey. He was, however, in constant touch with his departmental work, for Burges kept him regularly informed of each day's budget of news, and both Pitt and Dundas wrote him with a frequency indicating their anxiety for his advice.† Matters not requiring immediate attention were referred to him for decision, and copies of all despatches from abroad were forwarded. When the news of the excesses committed in France

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\* Ewart's recall deserves more attention than has been given to it in history, both as the ending of a definite epoch of English diplomacy and as the conclusion of the career of a very able diplomat. Auckland's efforts to secure Ewart's disgrace, Grenville's willingness to make him a scapegoat, and the seizure of Ewart's papers, as brought out in the Dropmore MSS., do not reflect much credit on the English government. The letters relating to the seizure of the papers are in Dropmore, II, 253-256. Grenville increased Mrs. Ewart's pension in order to get them, but this was not known even to Auckland. Mrs. Ewart afterward received the offer of a round sum from the opposition for these same papers, and made the amusing reply that she must reject the offer as she "considered them [the papers] as a sacred deposit belonging to her son." Auckland, II, 435. Ewart's importance and his great influence at Berlin are asserted in a letter from St. Helens to Croker, written November 2, 1836. Croker, II, 95-97.

† Letters from Pitt, Dundas, and George III to Grenville indicate that all the more important despatches were forwarded to Grenville for his advice. Dropmore, II, 310-315. Burke also wrote two letters to Grenville at this crisis, protesting against the government's policy of neutrality, as in effect a sanction of the crimes in France. The first letter was written August 18, 1792, when news of the events of the 10th reached England, but was not sent until September 19, when Burke wrote out his views after an interview with Grenville. *Ibid.*, III, 463-467.

reached London, the government was thrown into a fit of consternation and feared that its representative in Paris, Lord Gower, might suffer personal injury. A despatch was immediately sent recalling him. It was deemed unwise to delay until Grenville could be consulted, and Pitt himself drew up the despatch, writing also to Grenville of what he had done and adding: "I wish we could have had time to know your sentiments first, but that seemed impossible."\* Pitt was anxious that Grenville should return to assume charge of foreign business during this crisis, and Grenville accordingly made a hurried trip to London.† A short stay sufficed to calm the excitement of his fellow-ministers and to put affairs in order in his department. Burges wrote: "Lord Grenville came to town on Wednesday evening, and of course business begins to flourish."‡ No definite line of policy was determined upon, for it was evident that time was necessary to see the recent events in a true light. Pitt's dependence and Grenville's control of details are, however, forcibly brought out, for twice more Grenville was hurriedly recalled when Pitt disliked to assume the sole responsibility, and finally, in November, Pitt's desire that Grenville should formulate the line of policy most likely to deter France from attacking Holland forced the latter to resume his customary duties.§

The interesting and much-discussed question of whether England followed the wisest policy in determining upon war with France, and whether, indeed, war could have been avoided, must here be passed over, for there is no proof whatever that Grenville was at this period more favorable to war than was Pitt. In truth, Grenville's entire policy had thus far been based on the necessity of peace for England.|| The events of the 10th of August had not stirred him from his belief in the possibility of maintaining England's neutrality, and even the King held to the same view, though he is usually regarded as having been desirous of war.¶ Before two months had passed, however, a

\* Pitt to Grenville, Aug. 17, 1792. Dropmore, II, 302.

† Pitt to Grenville, Aug. 18, 1792. *Ibid.*, 303. Aust to Miles, Aug. 18, 1792. Miles, I, 329.

‡ Burges to Auckland, Sept. 21, 1791. Auckland, II, 446.

§ Pitt to Grenville, Nov. 5-12, 1792. Dropmore, II, 328. There are more letters from Pitt to Grenville in the fifteen days when the excitement in England was at its height than in the previous eighteen months.

|| Immediately after the signing of the peace of Sistovo, Grenville wrote: "I am repaid by the maintenance of peace, which is all this country has to desire. We shall now, I hope, for a very long period indeed, enjoy this blessing, and cultivate a situation of prosperity unexampled in our history." Grenville to Buckingham, Aug. 17, 1791. *Court and Cabinets*, II, 196.

¶ Brunswick had asked in August, 1792, for a declaration by England of her intentions. Grenville, through Dundas, instructed Murray, who was with Brunswick's army, to state that England would maintain her neutrality and could not make a declaration, though approving the purpose of restoring a responsible and peaceably inclined government in France. Dropmore, II, 313. George III approved the draft of this answer. *Ibid.*, 310.



great change took place in ministerial sentiment, due not so much to anxiety for the situation of royalty in France as to the astounding and rapid successes of French arms. From a nation about to be crushed by a superior military force, France became at a bound a great revolutionary power, pushing its doctrines and its armies beyond its own frontiers. French victories in Italy, on the Rhine, and in Belgium forced England to recognize that she must gird herself for war in defense of Holland. This was the determination reached by the English ministry early in November, 1792.\* A little later it is evident from Grenville's instructions to Auckland and others that in Cabinet circles at least there was a definite purpose to restrain, and if possible to overthrow, the revolutionary principles enunciated by the French government,† though the final and public defense for the inauguration of war was the opening of the Scheldt and the defense of Holland.‡

So far, then, as the adoption of a war policy is concerned, there is no question of comparative influence between Pitt and Grenville. It is true that after September, 1792, the King was eager for a rupture with France, and it is probable that Grenville more readily came to this view than did Pitt, but both were convinced of the necessity of war and were acting in perfect harmony. During the first months of preparation and endeavor, no important question of policy arose. Grenville was busy in detailed diplomatic negotiations with England's allies. Pitt labored with Dundas to perfect a scheme of military operations. But when

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\* This is shown by a letter from Buckingham to Grenville, Nov. 18, 1792. "I am very glad that you have taken your line as to Holland. . . . I think it probable that you will be forced, in case of the conquest of the Netherlands, to interfere; and you cannot do it more wisely than by choosing for the ground of the quarrel one so very essential to us, and upon which the minds of the people of England have been so lately made up." *Dropmore*, II, 336.

† January 15, 1793, Grenville wrote to Auckland in regard to the proposed publication of a letter from Fagel outlining the Dutch ideas of the attitude of Holland to France: "It is, I doubt not, adapted to the present temper of the Republic, but the expressions of still hoping to preserve peace by adhering to neutrality would be construed here to exclude all measures to be taken on the general view of affairs, and for the object of restraining the progress of French arms and French principles, even though we should not be the immediate objects of attack." *Ibid.*, 366. Almost the same words are used in the Cabinet minute of Jan. 25, 1793, containing St. Helens's instructions in proposing an alliance with Spain. The object here is stated to be "to establish a concert to prevent the progress of French arms and principles." *Ibid.*, 373.

‡ The most exhaustive and critical analysis of the questions that led to war is Oscar Browning's "England and France in 1793" in the *Fortnightly Review* for February, 1883. The *Dropmore MSS.* bear out in the main all of Browning's contentions, though the tenor of Grenville's letters after November 15, 1792, is that the war is practically decided upon and that only a most unexpected giving way by France can avert it. If this be true, the numerous and involved negotiations subsequent to that date lose much of their importance and significance. They were continued rather with the idea of gaining time for preparation, and in order to conciliate Holland, than with any real hope of a peaceful adjustment.

the counter-revolutions in France, the risings in Vendée, and the capture of Toulon gave promise of a rapid victory for the allies, it became necessary for England to manifest more clearly than she had as yet done her ideas in regard to the proper form of government and the proper political conditions to be established in France. It was in this connection that the first difference of opinion on the conduct of the war arose between Pitt and Grenville. While Pitt proceeded to draft a declaration to be published at Toulon, Grenville drew up a manifesto to be approved by the allies and to set forth England's objects in the war. The former was primarily a military proclamation, the latter a document of state, but both necessarily were drawn on similar lines. Pitt at first wished to postpone any general declaration until some considerable time after the issue of that from Toulon, but he soon yielded to Grenville's insistence, and the documents were ultimately issued in the reverse order from that desired by Pitt. Concerning the subject-matter of Grenville's manifesto, Pitt wrote to Grenville on October 5 :

"With respect to your paper, the most material suggestion which I have stated is that which proposes a more pointed recommendation of monarchical government with proper limitations. I do not see that we can go on secure grounds if we treat with any separate districts or bodies of men who stop short of some declaration in favour of monarchy ; nor do I see any way so likely to unite considerable numbers in one vigorous effort, as by specifying monarchy as the only system in the re-establishment of which we are disposed to concur. This idea by no means precludes us from treating with any other form of regular government, if, in the end, any other should be solidly established ; but it holds out monarchy as the only one from which we expect any good, and in favour of which we are disposed to enter into concert." \*

It is evident that the mental reservation here suggested by Pitt in favor of "any other form of regular government, if, in the end, any other should be solidly established," could not be included in the public declaration. If so included, the reservation would in itself negative the "specifying monarchy as the only system in the re-establishment of which we are disposed to concur." Yet to issue the declaration in the form proposed by Pitt, without the insertion of the saving clause, would just as effectively tie the hands of the British government, whether in future negotiations or in Parliamentary discussions, as if no reservation had been intended. Pitt also insisted on the insertion of a clause which demanded the restoration of the "ancient judicature," and was unquestionably influenced by Burke and to a lesser degree by the

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\* Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 5, 1793. *Dropmore*, II, 438.



information supplied him by Miles.\* Grenville stoutly resisted the line of policy proposed, and his objections were so far effective that Pitt yielded the main point, though still clinging to the "ancient judicature" clause.† The result was in some sense a compromise, in which monarchy in France was given a greater prominence than was desired by Grenville, but was distinctly not stipulated as an essential to peace. This was the solution for both the general manifesto and the Toulon declaration, though the latter, drafted by Pitt, was much more emphatic in favor of the restoration of monarchy than was the former. The two documents well illustrate the temper of mind of the two leading English statesmen at the time. Grenville's manifesto was published October 29, 1793. In regard to the government of France, it stated :

"The King demands that some legitimate and stable government should be established, founded on the acknowledged principles of universal justice, and capable of maintaining with other powers the accustomed relations of union and peace. His Majesty wishes ardently to be enabled to treat for the reëstablishment of general tranquillity with such a government, exercising a legal and permanent authority, animated with the wish for general tranquillity, and possessing power to enforce the observance of its engagements. . . . It is for these objects that he calls upon them [the people of France] to join the standard of an hereditary monarchy ; not for the purpose of deciding, in this moment of disaster, calamity, and public danger, on all the modifications of which this form of government may hereafter be susceptible, but in order to unite themselves once more under the empire of law, of morality, and of religion . . . ."‡

The Toulon declaration of November 20, 1793, said :

"His Majesty ardently wishes the happiness of France, but by no means desires, on that account, to prescribe the form of its government," but "His Majesty does not hesitate to declare that the reëstablishment of monarchy, in the person of Louis XVII and the lawful heirs of the

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\* Miles had considerable influence as a public writer and was occasionally employed by Pitt in that capacity. He was apparently thoroughly honest, but since his employment abroad by Pitt in 1787 and in 1790 he had grown to consider himself as an important ex-officio adviser of the government. Pitt evidently believed him possessed of unusual means of information about France. On September 16, 1793, Miles wrote to Pitt urging the printing and distribution in France of Hood's proclamation of August 28 announcing that Toulon had been taken in trust for Louis XVII. Miles, II, 101. The authority of Miles for exact statements must, however, be taken with great caution. He was one of those conscientiously argumentative persons who are always in the right. His perfect sincerity renders it doubly difficult to distinguish between the true and the false.

† Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 11, 1793. Dropmore, II, 443.

‡ *Parl. Hist.*, XXX, 1057-1060.

crown, appears to him the best mode of accomplishing these just and salutary views." \*

Grenville used monarchy as a rallying cry; Pitt asserted that it would be the best solution of difficulties in France. But in the document of neither does monarchy appear as "the only system in the re-establishment of which we are disposed to concur," nor, indeed, is there any mention of the restoration of the "ancient judicature."

Grenville's foresight had in truth saved Pitt from a serious tactical blunder. Had England issued a declaration upon the lines originally proposed by Pitt, the government would have been forced but a little later to the humiliation of pleading a secret reservation, in the terms of an energetic public document, or would have found itself compelled to maintain an absolute bar to any peace negotiation. England had declared her opinion that monarchy was best suited to France, yet she was not pledged to support that form of government alone. Burke and the ultra-royalists were indignant at the declarations made,† but the allies were satisfied, and indeed so strong was the impression abroad that England had specified monarchy as an essential to peace that nearly every continental historian has stated it as a fact.‡ In Parliament itself the opposition constantly harped upon the same theme, though Sheridan was frank enough to admit that no pledge had been given,§ and in every debate upon this topic up to 1797 it is noteworthy that the arguments of Fox and others were invariably based upon the Toulon declaration and not upon Grenville's manifesto. Pitt, at first apologetically, later triumphantly, denied the implied pledge, and was able to support his arguments by a reference to the strict letter of the documents. For this he had Grenville to thank. Thus at the very

\* *Parl. Hist.*, XXX, 1060.

† Burke wrote to Grenville October 27, 1793, asking to be heard on the manifesto, but was too late, for it had already been sent to the foreign powers. Dropmore, II, 450. Sir Gilbert Elliot temporarily alienated Burke at this time by acquiescing in the ministerial policy and accepting the mission to Toulon. Burke regarded the royalists as abandoned. Burke to Elliot, Sept. 22, 1793. Elliot, II, 169, 403. Elliot himself wished more favor shown to the royalists and desired Monsieur to come to Toulon to raise the royalist standard. Elliot to Dundas, no date, and Elliot to Lady Elliot, June 1, 1797. *Ibid.*, 189, 403. This proposal was, however, thwarted by Grenville through the agency of Malmesbury and the Comtesse de Balbi. Grenville to Malmesbury, Dec. 9, 1793. Dropmore, II, 476. Malmesbury to Comtesse de Balbi, Dec. 27, 1793. Malmesbury, III, 32; Sorel, III, 503.

‡ Sorel falls into this error. In discussing the Vendean risings, he interprets the manifesto of October 29, 1793, to mean that England will insist on a restoration of constitutional monarchy. Sorel's sources on this subject are all French or Austrian. *Ibid.*, 500-503.

§ *Parl. Hist.*, XXX, 1226, Jan. 21, 1794.

outset of the Revolutionary wars, the influence of Grenville had proved all-important in saving the administration from a compromising declaration.\*

## THE PRUSSIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WAR.

OCTOBER, 1793, TO SEPTEMBER, 1794.

At the very moment when England was outlining a plan of treatment for a conquered France, she was confronted with the danger of desertion by one of her allies, for Prussia, distracted by troubles in Poland, was threatening to withdraw her troops, urging as her excuse a bankrupt treasury. Shortly after the declaration of war by France Yarmouth had been sent to the continent † with the purpose of deciding upon some common ground of action with Prussia and Austria, and on July 14, 1793, he had signed a treaty with Prussia at Mayence, pledging both countries to continue in arms against France. ‡ A similar agreement with Austria was signed in London, August 30, though the latter contained in addition a mutual guaranty of territory as against France. § These treaties amounted to no more than pledges of good faith, || and neither contained any exact specifications of the

\* Fox led the attack upon what he termed Pitt's monarchical policy. "If we look at the declaration to the people of France, the first idea presented by it, although afterwards somewhat modified, but again confirmed by the declaration of Toulon, is that the restoration to monarchy must be the preliminary to peace." *Parl. Hist.*, XXX, 1260, Jan. 21, 1794. The arguments of the opposition on this point do not bear the stamp of sincerity. They were put forward more to embarrass the government than for any other purpose, for it was impossible for Pitt to deny that the restoration of monarchy was at least an object hoped for. To have done so would have disgruntled the allies and have lessened the chances of a royalist rising in France. In the first debates in the Lords, therefore, Grenville wholly evaded the subject, while Pitt in the Commons pursued a like policy until pinned down by a direct question from Fox. Later, as the hopes of monarchy dwindled, both Pitt and Grenville exalted the wisdom of the ministry in not having pledged England to an impossible policy.

† Yarmouth went to Prussia in July, 1793. He thought Prussia could easily be brought to more active participation in the war by promising (1) that no idea of a Bavarian exchange would be brought forward at the conclusion of the war; (2) that England would "not endeavour to interrupt the King of Prussia in the enjoyment of his new Polish acquisitions"—i. e., a negative guaranty of the partition of 1792. Beauchamp to Pitt, June 24, 1793. *Dropmore*, II, 399.

‡ Koch, IV, 236; Debrett, I, 18.

§ *Ibid.*, 19; Sorel, III, 460.

|| Bourgoing, III, 161, makes an entirely erroneous statement of the London convention of August 30, 1793. He says that secret articles provided that "l'Autriche recevait comme compensation de ses sacrifices pendant la guerre, une indemnité territoriale aux dépens de la France, à savoir, la Lorraine, l'Alsace, la Flandre; elle renonçait à toute prétention sur la Bavière, et l'Angleterre en échange lui garantissait la possession des provinces belges." The *Dropmore* letters disprove this and in fact show that while exact stipulations were under discussion they were all postponed because of the difficulty of reaching an agreement upon Dutch demands for indemnities. See also Morton Eden to Auckland, Nov. 16, 1793, Auckland, III, 144, and Auckland to Van der Spiegel, Jan. 24, 1794, *ibid.*, 173.



assistance to be rendered; but Prussia was bound by other treaties to furnish certain stipulated succors to England and Holland, and these Luccchesini asserted it was now impossible for her to render longer, unless England would grant a subsidy and guarantee Prussia's Polish possessions.\* The news reached England September 30. Grenville immediately asserted that neither demand could be complied with, but Pitt, while agreeing that the Polish guaranty was out of the question, was inclined to argue in favor of some sort of subsidy, provided the King of Prussia was first made to acknowledge that under existing treaties he could not honorably withdraw the troops already in the field.† Pitt further suggested that Malmesbury might be sent to Berlin to unravel the tangle in which Yarmouth's lack of ability had involved English interests;‡ but for the moment he yielded his own opinion, and in a Cabinet meeting on October 9 both guaranty and subsidy were refused, though the language of the note drawn up by Grenville was materially softened.§

Grenville was already convinced that Prussia had no intention of continuing the war, and he objected to the subsidy both on the ground that Prussia had no right to ask it, and also because he did not believe that it would insure vigorous action by Prussian armies. Accordingly he recalled Yarmouth,|| and only withdrew that recall to please Yarmouth, who still believed that he could be of service in Berlin.¶ But the English government had underestimated the strength of the anti-war party at Berlin. Instead of intimidating the Prussian court by insistence on the fulfilment of existing treaties, the English government was itself thrown into consternation on the receipt of an angry and threatening communication from Jacobi, the Prussian minister in London.\*\* Pitt at once reverted to his original plan, and this time the Cabinet was with him, while Grenville acquiesced in the proposed subsidy, prophesying nevertheless that no good would result from it.†† Malmesbury was despatched to Berlin to arrange the terms of a subsidy, but was instructed that the King of Prussia must first be made to acknowledge that the existing situation was a *casus federis* under the terms of the alliance of 1788.‡‡ On this point Frederick William II

\* Burges to Grenville, Sept. 30, 1793. Dropmore, II, 430.

† Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 2, 1793. (Two letters.) *Ibid.*, 433, 434.

‡ Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 4, 1793. *Ibid.*, 503. The date given for this letter in the MSS. is Feb. 4, 1794, but the context shows that this is an error. The letter is exactly 70 pages out of place in the order of arrangement used in the MSS.

§ Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 10, 1793. *Ibid.*, 441.

|| Grenville to Yarmouth, Oct. 17, 1793. *Ibid.*, 446.

¶ Yarmouth to Grenville, Nov. 6, 1793. *Ibid.*, 453.

\*\* Yarmouth to Grenville, Nov. 24, 1793. *Ibid.*, 470.

†† Grenville to Malmesbury, March 7, 1794. *Ibid.*, 516.

‡‡ Grenville to Malmesbury, Nov. 20, 1793. Malmesbury, III, 1.

satisfied the English envoy at their first interview,\* but the terms of a subsidy treaty were not easily agreed upon, and it was not until Haugwitz and Malmesbury had repaired to The Hague that a convention was signed on April 19, 1794, between England, Prussia, and Holland.† Malmesbury, who was enthusiastic in the pursuit of his object, had ventured to exceed the exact letter of his instructions,‡ resting rather upon his knowledge of Pitt's general purposes than upon the instructions received from Grenville. Pitt was wholly pleased with the result,§ but Grenville was still distrustful of Prussia, though publicly expressing his satisfaction,|| and his suspicions were speedily confirmed by the actual progress of events. Prussia refused to move her troops until the first subsidies were paid, and England was slow in making the payments. Frederick William II was in fact again yielding to the influence of that party in Berlin which saw Prussia's real interests in the exploitation of Poland, and by June, 1794, even Malmesbury had reached the conclusion that effective Prussian aid was not to be expected.¶ Nevertheless both he and Pitt clung to the remote hope of honesty in the Prussian government and successfully opposed Grenville's proposition of an immediate withdrawal of subsidies if the Prussian troops did not at once begin their march to the Rhine.\*\* Grenville yielded with good grace, for the time had now come, as he hoped, for the realization of his own essential line of policy.

While, therefore, Malmesbury was hurrying from post to post in the vain effort to infuse some energy into the Prussian camps, and while Möllendorf was secretly opening those negotiations with the French that were to lead to Prussia's complete withdrawal from the war, Grenville had brought Pitt and the English Cabinet to accept a project for an Austrian alliance that should go far in compensating for the treachery of Prussia.†† The plan as originally outlined did not necessarily mean

\* Diary, Dec. 26, 1793. Malmesbury, III, 28.

† For analysis, see Koch, IV, 269-271. For text, see *Parl. Hist.*, XXXI, 433.

‡ Malmesbury to Grenville, March 13, 1794. Malmesbury, III, 77.

§ Pitt to Grenville, April 24, 1794. Dropmore, II, 552.

|| In the Parliamentary debate on the treaty on April 30, 1794, there is nothing to indicate Grenville's opposition to the project. Indeed, he seems unnecessarily explicit in stating his personal approval, as if denying a rumor that he was opposed to it. "He was free to say that he never had had two opinions on the question, whether he should confine the aid to the stipulated succour of the former treaty, or extend it to that which was now secured." *Parl. Hist.*, XXXI, 453.

¶ Malmesbury to Grenville, June 21, 1794. Dropmore, II, 577.

\*\* Pitt to Grenville, June 29, 1794. *Ibid.*, 592. Portland to Malmesbury, July 23, 1794. Malmesbury, III, 124.

†† Auckland wrote to Henry Spencer on September 18, 1794: "The moment for Lord Grenville making his proposed great arrangement is at hand, for the messenger went last Saturday with the final instructions to Lord Spencer and Mr. Grenville . . . ." Auckland, III, 241. The terms used here and elsewhere on diplomatic projects indicate Auckland to mean that the Austrian project was due wholly to Grenville.

the withdrawal of Prussia, but as it was gradually developed came to be regarded as an alternative proposition to be executed in case of the failure of Malmesbury's mission.\* In the latter part of July, 1794, Spencer and Thomas Grenville were despatched to Vienna, while Mercy received orders from Thugut to proceed to London.† As soon as he learned of this new negotiation, Malmesbury, already disheartened, definitely gave up hope of realizing his object and asked to be recalled.‡ This was not at once granted, Grenville's purpose being apparently to use his known activities as a lever at Vienna, and it was not until October 24, some days after the Prussian subsidies had been officially stopped, that the recall was sent.§ By that time it was evident that England and Austria could not as yet agree upon the terms of a treaty.|| Grenville had expected to find a willingness at the court of Vienna to accept English direction in the conduct of the war, provided only a liberal subsidy and a specific guaranty of conquests were granted. Instead, his diplomats found a suspicious court and a changeable policy, while Grenville was hampered by his very loyalty to his Dutch ally, whose preposterous demands for indemnities vexed the Austrian ministers. Austria was anxious to exchange the Netherlands for Bavaria, and indirectly sounded the English ministry on this point, but did not venture to propose it openly.¶ Other considerations complicated the negotiation, and the English ministry, apparently frightened at the whirlpool of diplomacy in which it was in danger of being involved, hastened to withdraw its agents.

A few months later the rapid march of French armies forced England to acquiesce in a request for peace by Holland.\*\* It was a time of humiliation for the English government. England had entered upon the war fully convinced that a speedy victory would follow the combined efforts of the allies, and thus the attention of both Pitt and Grenville was at first directed principally to the form of government to be established in France and the nature of the indemnities to be secured. The essential feature of the English plan was the restitution of Belgium to Austria, that it might constitute a bulwark in defense of Holland. It

\* For Pitt's memoir on the plan, July 15, 1794, see Dropmore, II, 599. Thomas Grenville to Grenville, Aug. 4, 1794. *Ibid.*, 609.

† Grenville to Hertford, July 17, 1794. *Ibid.*, 601.

‡ Malmesbury to Grenville, Sept. 20, 1794. *Ibid.*, 633.

§ The subsidies were stopped on October 19. For a résumé of the Prussian point of view, see Grenville's note on a memorial presented by Jacobi. *Ibid.*, III, 536.

|| *Court and Cabinets*, II, 259-317; Sybel, III, 248-251.

¶ *Ibid.*, 248-251. Both Buckingham's *Court and Cabinets* and the letters in Dropmore (II, 600-640) leave the impression of surprise and dismay at the difficulty of the Austrian negotiation and the diversity of subjects to be considered.

\*\* Cabinet minute of November 18, 1794. Dropmore, II, 646.



was natural, therefore, that Grenville, uninformed of the real indifference of Austria to the Netherlands, and personally suspicious since 1791 of the methods and purposes of the Prussian court, should be inclined to an Austrian rather than to a Prussian alliance. Pitt, on the other hand, was, by the credit attaching to his diplomacy in virtue of the Triple Alliance of 1788, more favorable to a close friendship with Prussia. After the withdrawal of Prussia in 1794 no hope was seriously entertained of effective aid from that quarter, though in moments of desperation Pitt, and at times even Grenville, renewed futile attempts to secure it. These divergences of opinion in the Cabinet had not as yet amounted to a real disagreement, but the divergence existed and was in some degree at least a factor in determining the diplomatic action of the English government. The Prussian withdrawal was in no sense the result of Grenville's hostile attitude, but the quick turn to Austria was a distinct victory for a line of policy long considered and now matured by him. Momentarily, however, an Austrian convention seemed impossible of achievement, due not to any opposition by Pitt, but to the inability of the two governments to agree upon terms.

#### PORTLAND'S ACCESSION AND THE NEW PRUSSIAN PROPOSALS.

JULY, 1794, TO FEBRUARY, 1795.

While events rather than personal ascendancy were thus bringing Grenville's foreign policy into the foreground, an incident of home politics disclosed the fact that Pitt was the master in that field at least, and that he did not have so high a regard for Grenville's diplomatic services as to be unwilling to sacrifice him to the needs of party organization. Tentative suggestions in July, 1792, for the accession of the Portland wing of the Whig party had resulted in November of that year in definite proposals by Pitt for a coalition.\* These were refused, and it was not until July, 1794, that the breach between Fox and Portland had reached the point where complete rupture was inevitable. Portland headed a defection of Whig politicians composed of men who

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\* The negotiations for a coalition with Portland in 1792 have not been proved to the satisfaction of historians. Oscar Browning in "England and France in 1793" concludes that no definite proposals were made by Pitt, and that Malmesbury's account is untrustworthy, being based wholly on Loughborough's statements. The letters in the Dropmore MSS. are meager, but they indicate that in July, 1792, Pitt was making efforts to gain the support of Portland, and they prove that in November terms were actually proposed by Pitt and were refused. Pitt to Grenville, July 22, 1792; Dundas to Grenville, Aug. 9; Pitt to Grenville, Nov. 18; Buckingham to Grenville, Nov. 27. Dropmore, II, 294, 299, 335, 344.

could no longer uphold the radical doctrines of Fox, and in order to reward them for their support and bind them to his policy Pitt was compelled to make a number of Cabinet changes. This rearrangement was not difficult except in the case of Portland, to whom it was necessary to give one of the chief departments. Pitt was in a quandary and in his perplexity turned to Grenville, who had been urgent for the inclusion of Portland. He found no other solution than that Grenville should resign the Foreign Department to Portland, receiving in its place the Home Department, but without the conduct of the war, which was to be retained by Dundas.\* Immediately upon the receipt of Pitt's letter suggesting the arrangement, Grenville replied :

"I and my situation are, as you well know, entirely and always at your disposal, and . . . besides, I agree with you in thinking the expedient you propose the best to avoid an alternative which seems either way embarrassing. Under these circumstances I do not ask myself whether what is proposed is or is not a sacrifice on my part, but am ready at once to say that no consideration could reconcile to my mind the standing for a moment in the way of your wishes, or of so great a public object as is in question." †

Two days later, however, Pitt found that the Foreign Office would not be agreeable to Portland, and finally concluded the rearrangement by dividing Dundas's department, Portland assuming the direction of home and colonial affairs, while Dundas continued to manage the War Office.‡ The incident had, then, no immediate effect whatever on foreign policy, though it unquestionably gained Grenville the grateful confidence of the more solid portion of the new element in Pitt's ministry. It does indicate, however, that Pitt did not regard Grenville as indispensable in the department of foreign affairs, and at the same time it well illustrates the intimacy existing between the two men. Grenville's willingness to sacrifice his own personal preferences in order to insure party success§ could but increase Pitt's respect and incline him to listen to Grenville's advice, and it was in this very intimacy that Grenville's influence chiefly lay at this period. Differences as to policy were as yet the differences in private of warm personal friends and had not developed into Cabinet controversies.

It was as a result of the introduction of this Whig element into the Tory ministry that Grenville soon began to assume a more independent

\* Pitt to Grenville, July 5, 1794. *Dropmore*, II, 595.

† Grenville to Pitt, July 5, 1794. *Ibid.*, 596.

‡ Pitt to Grenville, July 7, 1794. *Ibid.*, 597.

§ In October, 1794, Grenville voluntarily offered to resign if it would assist Pitt in making arrangements for the recall of Westmorland from Ireland to make room for Fitzwilliam, but Pitt would not consider it. *Stanhope*, II, 284.



attitude on questions of foreign policy. Portland and his friends had joined Pitt because they believed in the necessity of the war and could no longer support the tactics of Fox in opposition to that policy. Gradually Grenville and Pitt grew apart, the former becoming more warlike in his sentiments, the latter more pacific. In the end Grenville was supported by the Portland Whigs as against Pitt, while in general Pitt found that the addition of the Whigs tended to destroy that unanimity which had heretofore been so marked a characteristic of his ministry. This development was not yet foreseen, nor had it been fully accomplished when next a difference of opinion arose between Pitt and Grenville. The failure of Grenville's Austrian negotiations in November of 1794 had momentarily set aside the thought of a close military alliance with any power, but in December George III himself revived the Austrian project,\* the chief obstacle to which was Thugut's demand for a substantial loan. The financial distress in England made it impossible for the ministry to promise such a loan until it had had the opportunity of laying the matter before Parliament, but meanwhile an unsatisfactory arrangement was made by which temporary advances were given to Austria. While the whole question of a systematic alliance with Austria was thus being necessarily postponed, it daily became more evident that Prussia was fast turning toward peace with France. Pitt, vexed with Thugut's stubbornness in demanding a burdensome loan and convinced that Prussia was the only power able to render efficient aid in a proposed reconquest of Holland, determined to bring forward again the plan of a Prussian subsidy. Already in December of 1794 Malmesbury, who was at Brunswick, deriving from an unpromising despatch by Paget a faint hope that Prussia might yet reënter the war, had written a final letter of appeal to Haugwitz,† though in explaining to Grenville this unauthorized communication he described his letter as one of indignant upbraiding.‡ On February 3, 1795, Malmesbury informed Grenville that Prussia was vexed at the excessive demands of the French and was about to renew war.§ A few days after this letter should have been received in London, Pitt brought forward his plan of a new Prussian subsidy to infuse new energy into the war and to keep Prussia from making peace with France.|| Grenville's opposition

\* George III to Grenville, Dec. 7, 1794. Dropmore, II, 650.

† Diary, Dec., 1794, and Malmesbury to Paget, Dec. 25, 1794. Malmesbury, III, 184-185, 228.

‡ Dec. 23, 1794. Dropmore, II, 653.

§ Malmesbury, III, 240.

|| This plan has been vaguely suspected by historians, but is customarily omitted in narratives of the period for lack of satisfactory proof. The fact that the details of this episode are for the first time brought out by the Dropmore MSS. seems to justify a more extended examination than the incident would otherwise require.

was instant and determined, and he informed Pitt that in case the plan was insisted upon he must resign from the Cabinet. Pitt was much agitated at the thought of a rupture with Grenville, though he cannot have been unaware that the latter's inclination to an Austrian alliance and his distrust of Prussia would cause him to oppose the project. In the last week of February Pitt wrote to Grenville:

"I have been trying to put together what, according to my ideas, should be the instruction on this unfortunate subject of Prussia, and have desired a Cabinet to be fixed for twelve tomorrow. I should wish much to see you first, and will be at leisure whenever you please at eleven. The more I think on the business the more uneasiness I feel at what you seemed likely to determine, and I want much to talk it over with you at large. I cannot help thinking that the real point of honour and duty in such difficulties as the present lies the other way; and, at all events, I am sure you will not wonder at my anxiety to tell you all that on reflection strikes me."\*

Grenville's objections to a Prussian subsidy were drawn up in a long memoir,<sup>†</sup> in which he reviewed former relations with Prussia and found in them and in the known interests of that state conclusive reasons against an English offer of subsidy. He argued that Frederick William II and his ministers were untrustworthy, that the money offered was not sufficient, that Prussia's preponderance in Holland and her rivalry with Russia were best served by a French alliance, that honest coöperation was not to be hoped for, that Prussia would use an offer from England merely to get better terms from France, and that Pitt's government would be discredited at home unless the treaty should prove an entire and unqualified success. In the course of his memoir Grenville exhibited his conviction that Austria was England's true ally. The real solution of all Prussian policy, he asserted, was the fear of Austria: "What other clue will so naturally explain the whole political conduct of the King of Prussia since the commencement of the war, as a determination to prevent the acquisition of a barrier to Austria on that side [the Netherlands], while that object was in question; and afterwards a determination to hinder the recovery of those Provinces." Prussia must be let go that Austria and Russia may be firmly bound to England. "The hope of uniting those three Courts [Prussia, Russia, and Austria] in one common system is one which neither our past experience nor any view of their present situation and disposition towards each other seem to justify. If this cannot be done, the option must be made, and being made, must be adhered to."

\* The date of this letter is between Feb. 20 and 28, 1795. Dropmore, III, 25.

† *Ibid.*, 26-30.

Grenville's determination to resign was unchanged, though it is not evident that any one save Pitt was aware of it. Pitt was profoundly disturbed at the disagreement and on March 2 wrote to Grenville :

"It would be useless to tell you on how many accounts I am miserable at what appears to be your determination. I am not at all sure, however, that the decision [of the Cabinet] will not be different tomorrow, and if it is, tho' I shall feel comfort in one respect, I am not sure, that with my view of the question, I shall not be at least as ill satisfied as now."\*

In any case, Pitt was anxious that Grenville should postpone his resignation until the end of the Parliamentary session, his reason being that the proposal for a new Prussian subsidy was as yet a Cabinet secret.

Meanwhile the opposition in the Commons were basing their arguments against an Austrian loan upon the failure of the previous subsidy to Prussia,† and as yet no opening in regard to the new plan had been made at Berlin. At the same time Grenville was pushing his plan of a closer alliance with Austria, and thus attempting to weaken Pitt's determination. On March 8, Stahremberg, the Austrian ambassador in England, wrote privately to Grenville urging a plan of campaign which omitted all idea of Prussian aid, but required more effective Austrian assistance and more substantial help given to the French royalists.‡ Grenville referred this to Cornwallis,§ who approved it, and Pitt also took it under consideration.|| In spite, therefore, of his previous insistence, nothing was done by Pitt to realize his project until news from abroad seemingly increased the hope of a change in Prussian sentiment. The negotiations at Basle between France and Prussia had been begun on January 13, but on February 5 Goltz, the Prussian negotiator, died very suddenly, and nothing was done until March 8, when Hardenberg reached Basle.¶ In the course of his journey to Switzerland, Hardenberg contrived an indirect communication with Malmesbury, in which he said that Prussia would be glad to reënter the war in case England would come forward with a subsidy.\*\* Malmesbury at first thought this a mere intrigue to bring pressure to bear on France,†† but on March 24 he was told by the Duke of Brunswick that

\* Dropmore, III, 30.

† See the speeches of Fox on February 23 and May 28, 1795. *Parl. Hist.*, XXXI, 1315-1321, XXXII, 38-41.

‡ Dropmore, III, 31.

§ Cornwallis to Grenville, March 19, 1795. *Ibid.*, 34.

|| Cornwallis to Grenville, March 31, 1795. *Ibid.*, 45.

¶ For dates and résumé of the negotiations at Basle, see Koch, IV, 294-300.

\*\* Malmesbury to Harcourt, March 16, 1795. Malmesbury, III, 253.

†† Diary, March 24, 1795. *Ibid.*, 213.



Prussia was decidedly in earnest. Malmesbury was then on his way to England, and immediately after his arrival in London, on April 4, Pitt resumed with enthusiasm his scheme of a Prussian subsidy. Instructions were drawn up ordering Spencer at Berlin to open negotiations with the King in person.\* On April 8, four days after Malmesbury's arrival, Grenville fulfilled his intentions by announcing his resignation to George III,† though conformably to Pitt's request this action was not made public. On April 10 Malmesbury wrote to L. Crawford from the Secretary of State's office, inclosing a letter to Hardenberg notifying him of what England proposed to do and urging him to delay signing a treaty with France until he had heard from Berlin;‡ but Pitt was too late. The peace of Basle had been signed on April 5, and as soon as the news reached London all hope of Prussian aid was put aside. Fortunately for Pitt's reputation, the English agents to whom instructions had been sent were wise enough to defer their execution and to write for further instructions.§ Spencer had indeed sought an interview with the King of Prussia, but had made no disclosure of Pitt's proposals. Grenville's resignation was withdrawn, and the incident was closed without comment, for in England it was entirely unknown outside the Cabinet,|| while on the continent only Hardenberg and Frederick William II had any suspicions of it. Even here all that was known was that Spencer had intrigued for a hearing, and Hardenberg could not enjoy the satisfaction of feeling that his diplomatic intrigue—for such alone it was—had nearly disrupted Pitt's Cabinet.¶

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\* This is shown by Spencer's letter to Grenville of April 24, 1795. Auckland, III, 298. Charles Arbuthnot, writing to Croker February 22, 1845, states that "Mr. Dundas (Lord Melville) acted for a short time as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and sent the instructions to Berlin." Croker, II, 371.

† Dropmore, III, 50. The reply of George III, on April 9, shows that the King had at first agreed with Grenville, but that he had been won over to the side of Pitt by repeated Austrian reverses.

‡ Malmesbury, III, 254.

§ Spencer to Grenville, April 24, 1795. Auckland, III, 298.

|| Miles, who was a very shrewd collector of information, was entirely ignorant of the Prussian subsidy plan; yet he thought himself informed of what was going on in the Cabinet. From December, 1794, to March, 1795, he was corresponding on his own account with Barthélemy, and was constantly writing to Pitt that France was favorable to a peace with England; but no attention was paid to him. Miles, II, 217-243. The debates in both houses of Parliament during the period exhibited an entire ignorance of Pitt's plan either by the opposition or by the governmental supporters not included in the Cabinet.

¶ Spencer's overture at Berlin has been treated by historians in various ways. Sybel, who covers the Treaty of Basle very thoroughly, makes no mention whatever of an English offer to Prussia. Bourgoing (IV, 165) states that one of the reasons why Barthélemy exceeded his instructions and signed the treaty of Basle was that he knew England was reverting to the idea of subsidizing Prussia, but no authority is given. Schlosser (VI, 607) says: "Lord Henry Spencer, who came

As time passed, it became perfectly clear to Pitt that there had been at no time any chance for the success of his proposed subsidy to Prussia. The signing of the Treaty of Basle completely weaned him from his inclination toward Prussia, and thereafter he was even more hesitant than Grenville of making advances to that power. Grenville, on the other hand, though fully as distrustful of Prussian sincerity as formerly, came to regard the Prussian court as one that could be bought if the price were sufficiently attractive, and on several occasions attempted to purchase its aid, not by money, but by promises of territorial acquisition. In the English Cabinet itself the incident clearly redounded to

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from Stockholm to Berlin expressly for that purpose, dared to offer 100,000 dollars to the Countess of Lichtenau for an audience, and a very large sum to the King, if he would consent to decline the peace." Schlosser's sole authority is the *Mémoires d'un Homme d'Etat*, III, 135-137, drawn from Hardenberg's papers. Schlosser is thoroughly untrustworthy on English politics, for he is both unfamiliar with English sources and exceedingly prejudiced. Sorel asserts that Spencer had opened at Berlin suggestions of a subsidy before Hardenberg's departure for Basle (IV, 255), notes Hardenberg's communication with Malmesbury, at Frankfurt, March 16 (IV, 279), and leaves the impression that Hardenberg did delay affairs at Basle as long as he dared. Thus Sorel states positively that the English subsidy plan was in the air. Incidentally he confuses Lord Henry Spencer with Earl Spencer, a member of the Cabinet, stating that the latter was at Berlin. A comparison of the correspondence of Auckland, with whom Spencer was very intimate, and the Dropmore MSS. proves conclusively that there was no positive knowledge on the continent of Pitt's plan, and that no offer was made to Frederick William II. Thus Spencer, far from going to Berlin "expressly for that purpose," was chosen for the Prussian position as early as September, 1794 (Dropmore, II, 621; Grenville to Malmesbury, Aug. 16, 1794), and he left Stockholm on December 13, before Pitt had brought forward his plan. Spencer, when he reached Berlin, did not even know that negotiations were about to be opened at Basle. Auckland, III, 279; Spencer to Auckland, Jan. 6, 1795. On February 23 Spencer wrote to the English Foreign Office that the Treaty of Basle would surely be signed, Prussia "not receiving any offers from England." *Ibid.*, 287; Spencer to Auckland. The résumé of the Cabinet situation in the body of this article shows that no decision had been reached in England at this time, and no instructions sent to Spencer. If, then, Spencer made any opening to Hardenberg, as Sorel states, it was on his own initiative solely, and was merely suggestive. On March 30 Spencer wrote to Grenville: "From the present appearance of things on the Continent, I take it for granted that it is not the intention of his Majesty's ministers to prevent, by any new overtures or proposals, the final conclusion of the treaty which this Court is now negotiating with the French Convention." Dropmore, III, 561. He also asked for a leave of absence, conclusive proof that up to April, 1795, no hint of Pitt's purpose had reached him. The Cabinet decision to make an offer to Prussia was reached on April 8. Dropmore, III, 50; Grenville to George III. At some time between that date and April 17, when the news of the Treaty of Basle reached London, instructions were sent to apply to the King of Prussia, as is shown by Spencer's letter to Grenville of April 24. Auckland, III, 298. It also appears from the same letter that Spencer had so far carried out his instructions as to secure an interview with Frederick William II, but that, already aware of the Treaty of Basle, he did not disclose Pitt's plan, and merely expressed England's regret at Prussia's action. It is possible that Hardenberg, after his interview with Malmesbury, had an idea that England might again come forward with a subsidy. It is probable that Spencer did bribe the Countess of Lichtenau in order to secure a personal interview with the King, for such bribery was customary at the Prussian court; but it is certain that no opening to the King was made before the Treaty of Basle was signed, and that no offer was made at any time.



the credit of Grenville, and it is from this moment that he could count upon a distinct following among its members. At the same time Pitt himself recognized the service that Grenville's stubborn opposition had rendered and was happy to resume relations of confidence and trust with his foreign minister.

### FIRST OVERTURES OF PEACE TO FRANCE.

OCTOBER, 1795, TO APRIL, 1796.

The confident expectation of victory with which Grenville entered upon the campaign of 1795 was not fulfilled. An alliance with Russia had been signed February 18, 1795, and on May 20 the protracted negotiations with Austria resulted in a formal treaty. From the Russian treaty not much was expected, but Grenville believed that in alliance with Austria, England would secure a rapid victory. In attacking the colonies of France and her allies, England was indeed successful and rejoiced in the conquest of Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope, but on the continent the failure of the Quiberon expedition and the inaction of the Austrian forces on the Rhine tended to discourage the ministry. Spain, too, made peace with France, while the war of factions in Paris failed to encourage the English government, for in London itself tumults and riots were the order of the day.

Moreover, England and Austria were equally suspicious of each other's motives and diplomacy. Wickham, Grenville's most trusted agent, was writing from Switzerland that offers were passing between Vienna and Paris.\* Thugut, earnest for the war yet hampered by the Polish situation, could not be convinced that the English ministers were not responsible for Hanover's acceptance of the Prussian scheme of neutrality.† Thus various conditions, combined with the establishment of the Directorate in France, giving some promise of an orderly and stable government, brought about a readiness to treat for peace, and by September this readiness had expanded into a definite intention on the part of the ministry to make at least an opening in that direction.

The first step looking toward peace was the determination by the English Cabinet to send Pelham to Vienna to sound the Austrian gov-

\* Wickham to Grenville, Aug. 12, and to Morton Eden, Aug. 18, 1795. Wickham, I, 152, 155. On Carletti's intrigues see Sybel, III, 431ff, and Sorel, IV, 302.

† Morton Eden to Auckland, May 15, 1796: "It appears impossible for me to convince any one that his Majesty's English ministers have no influence over the counsels of his Hanoverian Government." Auckland, III, 335.

ernment.\* At the same time instructions were given to Morton Eden to try to come to some clear understanding with Austria on the subject of war or peace. Portland objected to this despatch, though more from the effect it would be likely to have on Austrian military action than from opposition to peace, and, whether from this reason or some other, Pelham was not sent.† Grenville wrote to Morton Eden on October 10:

"In our present situation, we might possibly not find it very difficult to make either war or peace with advantage, if Austria will set her shoulders to the work in earnest."‡

A series of unexpected Austrian victories in October somewhat changed the situation. The King considered the action of the Cabinet to have been premature, for on October 27 he wrote to Grenville:

"No attempt ought to be encouraged of opening a negotiation, which ever has the effect of destroying all energy in those who ought to look forward to the continuance of war."§

And on November 30 he wrote again:

"I think no problem in Euclid more true than that if the French are well pressed in the next year, their want of resources and other internal evils must make the present shocking chaos crumble to pieces."||

Nevertheless, Pitt and Grenville were still determined to draw up instructions to Austria on the lines already indicated, and in the King's speech at the opening of the Parliamentary session on October 29 the statement was made that, if the changes in France brought into existence a government desirous of peace, England would be willing to treat on terms satisfactory and honorable to herself and her allies.¶ This was received with unbelieving derision by the Parliamentary opposition, but on December 8 a message from the throne proposed a vote in favor of a negotiation for peace, and Pitt asserted his sincerity and expressed his belief that a satisfactory treaty was now possible.\*\* The vote was given as requested and on January 30 instructions were sent to Morton Eden at Vienna, and to Wickham at Berne, in accordance with which the latter was to open communications with Barthélemy, the French agent in Switzerland.†† England expressed her desire for a general peace and asked the French government to suggest the means and conditions of a congress.

\* Grenville to George III, Sept. 21, 1795. Dropmore, III, 134.

† Portland to Grenville, Sept. 23, 1795. *Ibid.*, 135.

‡ *Ibid.*, 137.

§ *Ibid.*, 143.

|| *Ibid.*, 149. Another objector was the Earl of Mornington. See letter to Grenville, *ibid.*

¶ *Parl. Hist.*, XXXII, 142.

\*\* *Ibid.*, 570-603.

†† For text of note to Barthélemy and the French answer see Debrett, IV, 254-256.

The proposal of peace made to France in January of 1796 has usually been regarded as a mere ruse on the part of Pitt and as intended wholly for the benefit of the partisans of peace among his own followers.\* The vigorous English preparations for a continuance of the war and the extreme retrocessions insisted upon by Pitt if peace were made are cited in support of this view; but those who hold it have failed to appreciate the real hope Pitt felt that the convulsions in France were about to end in the establishment of a government inclined to give up the territories acquired during the last few years in return for an acknowledgment of its own stability and permanence. Pitt knew nothing of the sentiment rapidly developing in France tending to identify patriotism with the retention of the left bank of the Rhine.† He honestly believed that the French government ought, if sensible, to be satisfied with recognition within its ancient limits, and thus believing, he hoped for peace. His excessive ideas as to the extent of the necessary retrocessions were therefore due to a failure to appreciate the actual situation, and are not an evidence of a lack of good faith. In regard to the continuance of military preparations, Pitt's fixed idea was that he could use them to awe France into signing a peace,‡ and in any case it would have been the height of folly to limit England's readiness for war before a negotiation was actually begun. The relations of England and Austria in the summer and fall of 1795 are evidence that Pitt really desired and hoped for peace, for although Pelham was not sent to Vienna, Morton Eden was instructed repeatedly to secure from Thugut a definite answer as to whether he wished to recover the Netherlands, and Jackson in September was despatched as a special envoy to confer upon this point. Thugut refused an explicit answer,§ and the suspicions of Austria's duplicity, constantly forwarded by English agents abroad, caused the English ministry to fear that Austria was preparing to yield the Netherlands to France in return for territory elsewhere. France was in fact offering Bavaria to Austria in compensation for the left bank of the Rhine.|| The central point of English policy at this time was that France should not be permitted to retain Belgium, and Pitt was eager to press this solution while Austria was still in alliance with England. In England

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\* For example see Sybel, IV, 140ff.

† Sorel, IV, 374: "C'est un brevet de 'patriotisme' que de se prononcer pour le barrière du Rhin." But J. H. Rose controverts this. See article in *English Historical Review*, April, 1903, p. 287. Rose also maintains the genuineness of the English offer of peace.

‡ Pitt to Addington, Oct. 4, 1795. Stanhope, II, 328.

§ Morton Eden to Auckland, Nov. 8, 1795. Auckland, III, 322.

|| Sorel, IV, 425.

itself those in close touch with the government appreciated that a tendency to peace was growing in the ministry. Auckland, who at this very time was in constant communication with Pitt upon the details of the great financial showing that was to awe the French government, published in October, 1795, a carefully written pamphlet stating the arguments in favor of peace. Auckland in private was always an advocate of peace, but was essentially a party man and far too careful of his own political interests ever to venture an open struggle against the prevailing current of opinion. Burke regarded Auckland's pamphlet as an indication of a change in the intentions of the ministry, and was accordingly bitter and despondent.\*

But if Pitt was hopeful that the time had arrived when a satisfactory peace might be concluded, Grenville was far from that opinion. There was no disagreement between the two men as to the advisability of that peace, if it could be secured upon the extreme terms demanded by the English government. The difference was rather one of temperament and of judgment. Pitt eagerly hoped for peace; Grenville had no hope, but was willing to try the experiment. Pitt would gladly have accepted the Directorate as a satisfactory government in France, though he was not sure of its permanence; Grenville would grudgingly have tolerated it. Pitt regarded the influence of peace proposals on home politics as of secondary importance; Grenville considered this the essential benefit of the negotiation. When in December the King's message had requested a Parliamentary vote in favor of opening negotiations with France, Grenville had hastened to allay the fears of Austria, and to instruct English agents that the vote in question meant no more than that England recognized in France a government with which it was possible to treat, if so desired.† Later, when it was determined to despatch the note to Barthélemy, Grenville wrote to the King that personally he was strongly in favor of the proposal, and that it "could not but produce the most advantageous effects both at home and abroad. If it should, in the result, produce from France such an answer as it seems most reasonable to expect, from what is known of the views and dispositions of the present rulers there, it would, as Lord Grenville hopes, give additional energy and animation to the public mind here, and would probably lead to much discontent and demur in France."‡ Grenville added that if France should really prove amenable to reason, he would also be grateful.

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\* Auckland sent his pamphlet to Burke, who replied October 30, 1795. Burke's *Works*, V, 355.

† Grenville to Wickham, Dec. 25, 1795. Wickham, I, 227. Stahremberg to Grenville, Dec., 1795. Dropmore, III, 165.

‡ Jan. 30, 1796. *Ibid.*, 169.



This letter was in part a plea to overcome the King's opposition, but that it represents Grenville's real sentiments is unquestionable, for on February 9, 1796, in sending the overture to Barthélemy, he wrote Wickham in much the same terms and betrayed the same lack of faith in the negotiation.\* There was then, beyond question, no disagreement between Pitt and Grenville, though the latter probably preferred war to peace with the existing government of France. He could not, however, openly object so long as Pitt's ideas of peace were fixed to a restitution by France of the territories she had conquered, together with a retention by England of a part at least of her recently acquired colonies. The offer to France, acquiesced in by Austria,† received the answer that the Directory was prohibited by law from negotiating upon the cession of any part of the French Republic. The undiplomatic terms of the French note were construed as an insult to the English nation and were in some measure effective in rousing the English public. At once new and more energetic plans of campaign were put forward in conjunction with Austria. Thus the principal benefits which Grenville saw in the negotiation were realized.

#### GRENVILLE PLANS TO RECOVER PRUSSIAN AID.

FEBRUARY TO AUGUST, 1796.

The fact that while Pitt really hoped for peace, Grenville looked toward a continuance of the war is further borne out by two contemporary considerations, the first of which bore a direct relation to the proposal of peace, while the second involved the opening of a plan, distinctly Grenville's own, for increasing the forces that might be used against France. The first was the question of continuing aid to the royalists of France. The failure of previous efforts to organize the royalists still in France and the disasters experienced by the expeditions sent out from England had convinced Pitt that little was to be expected from such enterprises. When, therefore, the hope of peace began to gain ground in England, Pitt became unfavorable to further expenditure in aid of the royalists, and he thought that the money

\* Wickham, I, 269.

† Whether Austria actively joined in the proposal to France is a disputed point. Pitt stated in the Commons on May 10, 1796, that the step was taken "in concert with them [England's allies], though they were not formally made parties to the proposal." *Parl. Hist.*, XXXII, 1135. Sybel says Thugut refused to join. Sybel, IV, 152. But Morton Eden wrote to Auckland on June 13, 1796, in a private letter, that Thugut sent a separate note to France, similar to Wickham's, and received a very insolent reply which he preferred to keep secret. Auckland, III, 345.



could be much more wisely spent in an attack on the French colonies recently acquired by the treaty of peace with Spain.\* Windham, the determined advocate of the French nobility, appealed to Grenville, urging that it would be dishonorable for England to desert those whom she had encouraged to insurrection, and folly to withdraw the assistance already pledged.† Grenville became at once the champion of the royalists,‡ and was indeed at the moment concerting with Wickham a great royalist movement from Switzerland.§ Accordingly he opposed that part of Pitt's plan which involved the discontinuance of royalist efforts within the borders of France, and although Pitt still thought that the Count of Artois should be informed of the possibility of a treaty of peace between England and the Directorate,|| he yielded to Grenville's insistence and the preparations for renewed risings were continued.¶ Windham had written to Grenville on October 11:

"We shall really risk something more than injury to a cause which includes all other causes, if, as long as we maintain the war, and till we formally apprise the Royalists that they must no longer count upon our support . . . we do not continue to afford them all such assistance as we cannot show to be actually out of our power."\*\*

Grenville strongly supported this view, and it was his reference to Pitt of Windham's letter, together with a statement of his own entire approval, that persuaded Pitt to yield.

A second incident, contemporaneous with the proposal of peace made to France and indicating Grenville's expectation of the continuance of hostilities, was the initiation of a plan by which he hoped that Prussia might be induced to renounce her neutrality and to reënter the war. As early as December, 1795, Elgin was instructed by Grenville to sound the Prussian government on the idea of resuming hostilities with France, but Elgin's reply was unfavorable,†† and it was not until February, 1796, that the matter was again taken up. On February 8, at the very time the Cabinet approved the note addressed to Barthélemy, a proposal was made by Grenville to seek a renewal of the Prussian alliance. The Cabinet adopted the suggestion, although it involved a decided departure from England's previous line of policy,

\* Pitt to Chatham, Aug. 3, 1795. Stanhope, II, 349.

† Windham to Grenville, Oct. 11, 1795. Dropmore, III, 137.

‡ Buckingham to Grenville, Aug. 9 and 17, 1795. *Ibid.*, 95, 99. Windham to Grenville, Aug. 16, 1795. *Ibid.*, 98.

§ Wickham to Grenville, Sept. 6, 1795. *Ibid.*, 129; also Wickham, I, 155-225.

|| Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 16, 1795. Dropmore, III, 140.

¶ Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 18, 1795. *Ibid.*, 141.

\*\* *Ibid.*, 138.

†† Elgin to Grenville, Dec. 26, 1795. *Ibid.*, 163.

since it proposed the partitioning of weaker states among the greater powers. According to Grenville's plan, Prussia was to be won to a warlike activity by a promise of the Westphalian provinces and the Netherlands, while Austria was to be compensated by the acquisition of Bavaria.\* The King vigorously opposed the adoption of such a policy, terming it a disgrace to England that she should sink to the level of continental powers in proposing an unjustifiable spoliation of minor states. But while the plan as outlined was agreed to by the Cabinet, nothing appears to have been done at the time toward executing it. Grenville himself was doubtful if the time had arrived for making an offer to Prussia and distrusted the suggestions which had evidently been made by that power as merely intended to wring some concession from France,† while Elgin considered it so little likely that any overtures were to be made to Prussia that on May 1 he asked for leave of absence on the ground that there was nothing to do at Berlin.‡ In the meantime, however, various considerations had brought the matter to the front again. Late in April the news of Bonaparte's astonishing Italian victories reached England. Early in May Bentinck, who had for some months been investigating the likelihood of a rising in Holland in favor of the Stadtholder, became convinced that nothing was to be done without the aid of Prussia, and was hopeful that Prussia was about to offer that aid.§ At the same time the mutual suspicions of England and Austria were renewed, and Grenville feared that Austria was secretly preparing to make a separate peace with France.|| He therefore refused Elgin's request for a leave of absence, hinting that important instructions might soon be expected.¶ Bentinck's hopes in regard to Prussia were based on rumors of difficulties with France, and these had existence in fact, though they did not tend to the solution desired by England. Prussia was striving

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\* George III to Grenville, Feb. 9, 1796. Dropmore, III, 172, 173.

† Grenville to Elgin, Feb. 9, 1796. *Ibid.*, 174.

‡ *Ibid.*, 198.

§ *Ibid.*, 150-159, 176, 208-211. Bentinck's correspondence with Grenville fills a large place in volume III of the Dropmore MSS. In December of 1795 he was very hopeful of a revolution in Holland, but as the months went by without any active steps being taken to bring this about, he became more and more convinced of the necessity of Prussian intervention, if anything was to be accomplished. His letters furnish excellent material for a study of conditions in Holland and of the political intrigues there.

|| Grenville to Morton Eden, May 24, 1796. *Ibid.*, 206. The idea was widespread in England that Austria was arranging a separate peace. See opinions of Sheffield, Perregaux, Crauford, and Rose. Auckland, III, 347, 351, 352. See also Hudson to Charlemont, May 29, 1796. Charlemont, II, 273. Thugut was as suspicious of England as Grenville was of Austria. Morton Eden to Grenville, June 13, 1796. Dropmore, III, 208.

¶ Grenville to Elgin, May 17 and June 23, 1796. *Ibid.*, 206, 215.

in the spring of 1796 to force France to yield her claim to the left bank of the Rhine and had gone so far as to form an army of observation in Westphalia, but she had no serious intention of breaking with France.\* Grenville was ignorant of Prussia's real purposes, and on receipt of an encouraging letter from Elgin he determined to risk an offer to the court of Berlin, though he was by no means confident of its success.†

This new combination and the proposed means of accomplishing it originated entirely with Grenville. Pitt was not unwilling to make the experiment, but he did not count upon its success, and his real conviction was that England would soon be deserted by her allies in the contest with France. On June 23 he wrote to Grenville:

"I can conceive no objection in the mind of any of our colleagues to see whether the arrangement to which you have pointed can be made acceptable both to Austria and Prussia. But though I think it should be tried, I do not flatter myself with much chance of success." ‡

In the course of the following month the reports of English agents abroad strengthened Grenville in his determination to apply to Prussia. Bentinck furnished still further evidence in support of his idea that the court of Berlin was preparing to intervene in Holland.§ Wickham announced the complete collapse of the system of "partial insurrections" in France, and foresaw that he would soon be forced to leave Switzerland.|| Elgin reported the strong impression made at Berlin by the arguments of Gouverneur Morris, and experienced himself a more friendly intercourse with the Prussian ministers.¶ Morris,\*\* who

\* Sybel, IV, 239-246. Koch, IV, 385.

† Grenville to Buckingham, Aug. 14, 1796. *Court and Cabinets*, II, 348.

‡ Dropmore, III, 214.

§ Bentinck to Grenville, July 5, 1796. *Ibid.*, 217.

|| Wickham to Grenville, July 19, 1796. *Ibid.*, 223.

¶ Elgin to Grenville, July 28, 1796. *Ibid.*, 225.

\*\* Morris had come to London in June, 1795, and almost immediately gained the ear of Grenville, to whom he outlined his vast ideas of continental combinations against France. In June, 1796, he journeyed to the continent, ostensibly going to Switzerland, but in reality traveling to various courts in the interests of England. He did not know the exact terms to be offered, but was aware of their general character, and in a sense acted as an advance agent for England. Grenville and Morris agreed that the latter's best line of argument was to show that Prussia was doomed to destruction if France was permitted to dictate terms of peace to Europe, and to exhibit Prussia's material advantage in an alliance with England and Austria. Grenville wrote to Morris, August 23, 1796: "Great use may, however, I believe be made of him there [at Berlin]. . . . His leanings are all favourable to us, and you are not ignorant how much they may be improved by attention and a proper degree of confidence." *Ibid.*, 238. The letters between Grenville and Morris given in Dropmore are duplicates of those given in Morris's *Diary* and in Jared Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*. The latter book includes two letters not given elsewhere, the first of which is important, as it contains Grenville's suggestions to Morris as to what he should urge at Berlin. Sparks, III, 89.



seems to have exercised considerable influence in determining Grenville to attempt a new Prussian arrangement and who was in fact acting as an unofficial English agent, reported that the Prussian ministers were by no means disinclined to listen to overtures, and believed a new combination perfectly possible. Before all of this information reached London it had finally been determined to send Hammond, an under secretary of state, to Berlin to outline the proposed exchanges and to offer a definite alliance.\* George III was still bitterly opposed to the project, and unwillingly yielded to Grenville's argument that France could in no other way be deprived of the Netherlands than by giving them to Prussia, and that this necessarily involved compensating Austria with Bavaria.† Meanwhile Austria was not informed of what was taking place, and when Thugut at a later date learned of the proposal he was highly indignant,‡ though it is unlikely that Grenville would have followed Morris's suggestion of coming to terms with Prussia without waiting for Austria's consent.§

Morris left Berlin a few days before Hammond arrived, believing that he had paved the way for a successful negotiation; but when on August 17 Hammond had a long interview with Haugwitz, he was convinced that the veiled proposals he was instructed to make were a complete surprise to the Prussian minister, while the embarrassed reply given him equally convinced him that nothing was to be expected from the Prussian court.|| Haugwitz might well be surprised and embarrassed, for on August 5, less than a fortnight before Hammond's interview, Prussia and France had signed a secret treaty committing Prussia to a system of neutrality. The English offer received no encouragement whatever,¶ and upon the receipt of Hammond's report Grenville set aside for the time being all thought of a new combination that should include Prussia.

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\* Grenville to George III, July 29, 1796. Dropmore, III, 227. Nominally this proposal outlined the exchanges preparatory to a general peace; in reality it meant an alliance to force France to accept the terms agreed on.

† Grenville to George III, July 31, 1796. *Ibid.*, 228.

‡ Sybel, IV, 318. Morton Eden to Auckland, Dec. 9, 1796. Auckland, III, 368.

§ Morris to Grenville, Aug. 10, 1796. Dropmore, III, 563.

|| Hammond to Grenville, Aug. 17, 1796. *Ibid.*, 235.

¶ Elgin to Grenville, Aug. 23, 1796. *Ibid.*, 238; Pitt to Chatham, Sept. 4, 1796. Stanhope, II, 381.



PITT'S SECOND PEACE PROPOSAL AND MALMESBURY'S MISSION  
TO PARIS.

SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER, 1796.

With the failure of Grenville's plan to secure the aid of Prussia the pendulum of English foreign policy swung back again to ideas of peace, though Grenville himself was in no wise inclined to discontinue war. Pitt, however, oppressed by the knowledge of the rapidly increasing financial difficulties of the English government, and believing that a change was imminent in the sentiments of the French Directory, reasserted his authority in the Cabinet and resolved to attempt once more a negotiation for peace. In August, 1796, he had had a number of secret conversations with one Nettement, a Frenchman claiming to represent a pacifically inclined faction of the Directory.\* Nettement gave a detailed and truthful analysis of the political situation in France and urged that England should propose to France a negotiation for peace in so frank a way that the Directory "should be forced to declare openly if it desires peace or wishes to continue the war."† The plan of negotiations proposed by this French agent was based more upon the idea of assisting the moderate party in Paris to gain control of the Directorate than upon any fixed belief that peace would be assured by such a result, but Pitt's readiness to listen to these indirect suggestions evinces his real interest in the main question. Throughout the summer of 1796 the English partisans of peace were active in pushing their policy. Auckland urged Pitt to renew overtures to France and was corresponding with friends in Paris, by whom he was informed that the exact moment had arrived when a proposal from England must be listened to if made immediately,‡ while in non-political circles the rumor was current that the Cabinet had already reached the decision to end the war. It was even asserted that the ministry and the oppo-

\*Smith MSS., 369. The papers of Joseph Smith, Pitt's private secretary, show that Sir R. Woodford brought Nettement and Pitt together and state the substance of conversations.

†*Ibid.*, 370-371. On August 15 Nettement returned to France, but before leaving wrote out his advice. He believed the Directory to be opposed to peace, but that it was afraid of the moderate party which advocated it, and that if the Directory "should haughtily reject the conditions of peace proposed by England, I should not be surprised by a union between the Moderates, who wish for peace, and the Jacobins, who do not love the Directory, in order to replace them by other governors. But as long as the British Administration has not made known its views in an authentic manner, they will be protected from every sort of influence, and will govern the armies and the people despotically" (p. 370). Nettement also advised a protracted negotiation, and it is interesting to note that the methods he proposed were those actually employed in Malmesbury's negotiation at Paris.

‡Auckland to Pitt, July 30, 1796. Auckland, III, 352-354.

sition, Pitt and Fox, were to join hands in a great, friendly coalition whose patriotic unanimity should terrify France and so secure an honorable treaty.\* The rumors of coalition were without foundation, but those prophesying a renewal of overtures to France were shortly realized in a Cabinet decision, for on September 2 it was agreed that an offer should be made through the medium of Wedel, the Danish minister at London, and in a letter to the King Grenville outlined the terms that might reasonably be expected if the negotiations were successfully concluded.† These were : to give to France Savoy, Nice, and all of the Rhenish conquests not belonging to Austria, and all French colonies captured by England ; to restore to Holland all colonies except the Cape, Ceylon, and Cochin ; to secure for Austria the *status quo ante bellum* ; but if France absolutely refused to return the Netherlands, and Austria was willing to accept the Bavarian exchange, England would consent to the transfer, provided the new ruler of the Netherlands was not too closely bound to France.

The details of this plan are of interest as determining just how far Pitt was ready to go in order to secure peace. Grenville, discouraged at the outlook for the allies, was in entire harmony with his chief ‡ and seems to have yielded momentarily his personal convictions. Events soon revived his hopes, for immediately after the message had been forwarded through Wedel news was received of the retreat of Pichegru and Jourdan before the Austrian army under the Archduke Charles, while Thugut notified Grenville that Russia would place 60,000 men in the field against France if a small English subsidy were granted.§ Bentinck wrote from Holland that he was nearly positive that a new and secret treaty had recently been signed between France and Prussia.|| If this were true, there was little likelihood of the adoption of a peace policy by the government of France. The influence of these events on English foreign policy was immediate. It was still determined to continue overtures to France, but at the same time greater vigor was displayed in preparing for war. Russia was offered the island of Corsica and was promised a small subsidy, and Austria

\* Halliday to Charlemont, Aug. 7, 1796, and Charlemont to Halliday, Sept. 12, 1796. Charlemont MSS., II, 278, 283.

† Dropmore, III, 239.

‡ George III to Grenville, and Pitt to Grenville, Sept. 4, 1796 ; and Pitt to Grenville, Sept. 5, 1796. *Ibid.*, 242.

§ Russia voluntarily proposed to Austria August 21, 1796, to put this force in the field. Sybel, IV, 321ff. Thugut referred it to Grenville on September 10. Dropmore, III, 246. Thugut had no knowledge at the time of the English offer to France through Wedel, but was hopeful that the Russian offer would wean Grenville from his scheme of a Prussian alliance.

|| Bentiuck to Goddard, Sept. 13 and 20, 1796. *Ibid.*, 250, 253.

was assured that England had no intention of concluding peace without the full concurrence of her ally.\*

The French answer to the English overture seemed "insolent" to George III,† but the ministry determined to make another effort, and sent a direct message to France, under a flag of truce, with the result that a negotiation was arranged to be held at Paris. Grenville's attitude was distinctly changed. While no definite declaration of his determination to oppose a treaty of peace is to be found, the entire tenor of his letter to the King in explanation of the renewed offer under flag of truce‡ and of his private correspondence with his brother is indicative that he regarded the continuance of negotiations as of value solely for the benefit to be derived from them in their influence on the political situation in England. He wrote to Buckingham that to his view the peace proposals were justifiable, since "in the present moment, the object of unanimity here in the great body of the country, with respect to the large sacrifices they will be called upon to make, is paramount to every other consideration."§ Yet Pitt was still sincere in his offer to France|| and was still supported by the majority of his colleagues. Grenville therefore directed his energies toward drafting the instructions of Malmesbury, the English negotiator, in such a fashion as to preclude the hasty conclusion of a treaty and to prevent any sacrifice of English interests. Malmesbury, as Fox pertinently stated in a later discussion of the negotiations, was given "full powers to

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\* The English ministry sent an order on August 31, 1796, for the evacuation of Corsica. The resolution to offer Corsica to Russia was taken on October 19, but the new orders did not reach Jervis and Elliot in time. Corsica was evacuated October 26. Elliot, II, 355-361.

† George III to Grenville, Sept. 23, 1796. Dropmore, III, 255.

‡ Grenville to George III, Sept. 23, 1796. *Ibid.*, 256.

§ Sept. 24, 1796. *Court and Cabinets*, II, 350.

|| Pitt's sincerity is generally asserted by English historians and denied by French writers. The impression received from this study is that he was certainly sincere up to November 7, but that after that date, as will be shown, he permitted Grenville to resume his ascendancy in foreign affairs. Sybel thinks Pitt sincere, or at least that he saw equally the advantages of peace and the benefits of a refusal by France of the opening made. Sybel, IV, 322. Mr. Dorman, in the first volume of his recent *History of the British Empire in the Nineteenth Century* (pp. 31-36), maintains the thesis that the sole object of Malmesbury's mission was to secure information about France, but this conclusion is based on a superficial study of but a small part of the available English sources. Sorel, in his fifth volume, asserts that the English government, in both 1796, at Paris, and 1797, at Lille, was determined that peace, if signed, must include the separation of the Netherlands from France. This is certainly a great error for 1797, and probably so also for 1796, and inasmuch as it is upon this thesis that Sorel rests his whole conception of the relations of France and England, the error becomes a vital one. Sorel in fact knows nothing of English sources for this period, as has been very clearly shown by R. Guyot and P. Muret, in their critical examination of the documentation of Sorel's fifth volume, *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, XV, Janvier, 1904, p. 255.



conclude . . . but was allowed no latitude to treat."\* Moreover, Grenville particularly emphasized the point that "by the convention signed with the Court of Vienna in the beginning of the war, the King is bound not to make peace without the consent of Austria, except on the terms of procuring for that power the restitution of all it may have lost in the war."† No mention was made in these instructions of the possibility of a Bavarian-Netherlands exchange.

The conditions which still determined Pitt to bring the war to an end, if possible, were the difficulty of raising further loans in England, the coolness which existed between England and Austria, and the threatened revolution in Ireland. A financial crisis in England, due, according to Fox and Sheridan, to the repeated advances made to Austria,‡ greatly hampered the government. Austria demanded an increased loan and was irritated at receiving the answer that it must be postponed for a time.§ Thugut also thoroughly disapproved of the sending of Malmesbury to Paris and refused either to despatch any Austrian diplomats to treat for peace or to commission Malmesbury to act for Austria. Although he was compelled to acknowledge that Austria could not refuse a peace that fulfilled the terms of the alliance with England, he was sincere and earnest in arguing in favor of the continuance of war.|| In Ireland the effect of the recall of Earl Fitzwilliam had been to arouse a serious discontent, and there was real danger of a widespread rebellion. Pitt knew also of Hoche's projected invasion for the purpose of assisting the disaffected Irish. These conditions, then, were operative at the moment when Malmesbury, on October 18, left Dover for France.

The impression received from Malmesbury's correspondence and diary is that he undertook his mission in the full conviction that Pitt seriously desired peace,¶ and also in the belief that such a peace was possible if France would but listen to reason. Grenville had instructed him to insist on the customary forms of diplomacy, but Malmesbury, fearing that insistence on such forms would lead to a sudden rupture, passed over in silence various slights put upon him. Thus the answer of Delacroix, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the first note presented by Malmesbury was couched in terms of recrimination, but Malmesbury ignored this, choosing to consider it as due to unfamiliarity

\* *Parl. Hist.*, XXXII, 1476.

† Grenville to Malmesbury, Oct. 16, 1796. *Dropmore*, III, 260.

‡ *Parl. Hist.*, XXXII, 1518-1524.

§ Grenville to Stahremberg, Nov. 13, 1796. *Dropmore*, III, 267.

|| Morton Eden to Auckland, Nov. 16, 1796. *Auckland*, III, 362; Sybel, IV, 318-333. Malmesbury to Pitt, Oct. 17, 1796. *Malmesbury*, III, 266.

¶ Malmesbury to Pitt, Oct. 17, 1796. *Ibid.*



with diplomatic usage. Grenville, however, despatched in answer to Delacroix a written memorial, which Malmesbury was instructed to hand in without change. The wording of the memorial, beginning "Quant aux insinuations offensantes et injurieuses que l'on a trouvé dans cette pièce,"\* did not foreshadow a happy ending for the negotiation.

By November 7, the date upon which this despatch was written, Grenville was again the leader in directing England's foreign policy, for the events of the week previous had greatly strengthened the force of his arguments. In that week came the news of the organization of "patriotic societies" in Ireland, and the fear of a general rebellion passed away.† In that week, also, Pitt gained a decided Parliamentary victory on questions of home defense,‡ while intelligence from Austria indicated a revival of energy in that government. Pitt found that he had overestimated the force of the English clamor for peace and, though personally averse to the war, yielded to Grenville's insistence that the negotiations should be carried on in such a way and for such an end as at least to require all of England's original demands. On November 5 he wrote a general letter of commendation to Malmesbury,§ but one containing no suggestion of concessions to France, while two days later Canning|| also wrote, hinting that Pitt would have been better pleased had Malmesbury taken a stiffer tone in response to the insulting language of Delacroix.¶ Canning was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and, perhaps more than any other at the time, was acquainted with Pitt's real sentiments and purposes. In the same mail Canning despatched Grenville's instructions and memorial, and these, with Pitt's letter, reached Malmesbury November 10. The entry in Malmesbury's diary for the next day is brief, but illuminative: "Writing—thinking over my new instructions—*cosi, cosi*."\*\* Malmesbury understood perfectly from the tenor of Grenville's instructions the part he was now to play, and he understood also from his private letters that they were in truth new instructions. That they were new to Malmesbury goes to prove that he had up to this time believed Pitt desirous of making peace, and in fact Malmesbury, on December 20, in an interview with Sandoz-Rollin, the Prussian minister in Paris, accused Grenville of

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\* Malmesbury, III, 301.

† Charlemont MSS., II, 284-294.

‡ Pitt to Malmesbury, Nov. 5, 1796. Malmesbury, III, 295.

§ Pitt to Malmesbury, Nov. 5, 1796. *Ibid.*

|| *Ibid.*, 297.

¶ Masson pictures Delacroix as utterly without knowledge of proper diplomatic language or customs, and as permitting himself to be put entirely in the wrong by Malmesbury. Yet he also states that Delacroix merely followed the instructions of the Directory in these negotiations. Masson, 390-395.

\*\* Malmesbury, III, 305.

having thwarted Pitt's purpose.\* From November 11 Malmesbury's conduct in negotiation, his reports to Grenville, and his letters to Pitt and Canning exhibit an entirely different attitude from that previously assumed. He now sought merely to put France in the wrong, and to cast upon her the blame for an inevitable rupture of the negotiations. The diplomatic maneuvers became in fact a contest for the advantage of position, for the Directory had been at no time sincere in its acceptance of the English overture.† The actual issue was a victory for England, for Malmesbury, presenting Grenville's principle of "compensatory restitutions," prohibiting any connection between France and the Netherlands, asked that the Directory either accept this as the basis of a treaty or bring forward a counter-project. The Directory refused to do either and sent Malmesbury his passports, greatly to the advantage of the English ministers, who now recovered a wavering Parliamentary constituency by disclosing the "honorable and sincere offer of peace made to France, and the insulting refusal of that country to consider it."‡

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\* "Aujourd'hui matin, Malmesbury m'a fait proposer ou de passer chez lui ou de me voir dans une tierce maison. J'ai préféré le dernier parti. Son début m'a étonné: 'Sachez, m'a-t-il dit, que j'ai bien plus à me plaindre du ministère britannique que du Directoire; sachez encore que je le publierai à Londres et que je me plaindrai au chancelier Pitt de la mauvaise tournure que le lord Grenville a donnée à la négociation; il a fait retomber sur l'Angleterre tout l'opprobre de la continuation de la guerre.' 'Mais le sieur Pitt voulait-il décidément la paix?' ai-je interrompu. 'Il la voulait, j'en suis certain', a-t-il répliqué avec chaleur, 'tout comme je suis certain que la négociation sera reprise en moins de trois semaines de temps.'" Bericht von Sandoz-Rollin aus Paris, Dec. 20, 1796. Bailleu, I, 106.

† According to Barras's *Memoirs*, Carnot, previous to Malmesbury's arrival, had expressed the opinion that the Netherlands were not essential to France, but this was not agreed to by other members of the Directory (II, 265). Barras shows that it was only due to the political situation in France that the English overture was accepted, and he believed that that overture had no other purpose "than to expose the Directorate to odium" (II, 288). He pictures himself and Larévellière-Lépeaux as demanding Malmesbury's dismissal, Rewbell desiring delay, Letourneur anxious to continue negotiations, and Carnot standing by Barras's opinion, but hesitatingly; and in the result Barras asserts that France experienced a wave of patriotic enthusiasm from Malmesbury's dismissal.

‡ In the debates in Parliament on Malmesbury's negotiation the great effort of both Pitt and Grenville is to prove England's sincerity. Fox denied this, and hinted that Malmesbury was himself deceived. "I know that some weeks ago a very confident report was circulated with respect to the probability of peace. It would be curious to know how far Lord Malmesbury at that period was influenced by any such belief." *Parl. Hist.*, XXXII, 1473.

Grenville's résumé of the negotiations and defense of the government is in *ibid.*, 1406ff. An abstract of the Directory's version as published in the *Rédacteur* is in *ibid.*, XXXIII, 398ff.

## GRENVILLE'S SECOND OVERTURE TO PRUSSIA AND HAMMOND'S JOURNEY.

NOVEMBER, 1796, TO MAY, 1797.

In the episode just narrated the view taken is that up to November 7, 1796, Pitt was really sincere in the proposals made to France, while Grenville was sincere only so long as he saw no hope of any other than a peaceful solution, and that with his very first instructions to Malmesbury he was planning a renewal by England of a vigorous war policy. An additional proof of this purpose on Grenville's part and of his resumption of authority in foreign affairs is that on November 7, the day that his memorial to the Directory was despatched, he reopened with Austria the idea of securing Prussian aid.\* His plan was, as formerly, that Austria should cede the Netherlands to Prussia, and herself take Bavaria. In December, 1796, and again in January, 1797, Morris wrote of rumors of Prussian willingness to enter into the proposed exchanges,† but Thugut's dislike of a Prussian alliance and his earnestness in maintaining Austrian war preparations led Grenville to set the plan aside for the moment. But in February Prussia herself made advances to England. These were caused by the suspicion prevalent at Berlin that France was offering a separate peace to Austria, involving the sacrifice of Bavaria in return for the Rhenish frontier. The offer had in fact been determined upon by the Directory, and, though the terms were not positively known at Berlin, the old Prussian jealousy of Austria was aroused.‡ The overture made to England was apparently for an agreement as to the terms of a general peace to be imposed on France,§ but the refusal of France to accept such terms

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\* Sybel, IV, 327.

† Morris to Grenville, Dec. 21, 1796, from Vienna, and Jan. 26, 1797, from Dresden. Dropmore, III, 287, 294. In December Morris urged upon Thugut the necessity of securing Prussian aid (Morris, II, 62), and on January 31 he proposed to Grenville that England should offer Hanover to Prussia. *Ibid.*, 257-264. This last letter is not in Dropmore.

‡ Sybel states that in the middle of January, 1797, France desired to make peace with Austria on these terms: 1, to restore Lombardy to the Emperor; 2, to give Bavaria to Austria in exchange for Belgium; 3, France to keep the left bank of the Rhine. Sybel, IV, 464. Barras details a long discussion by the Directory on January 15 of Clarke's offer to Austria. The terms of Carnot's despatch to Clarke coincide with the points given in Sybel. Barras, II, 312. The Berlin rumor also included a cession of the Netherlands to England. Morris, II, 275.

§ Grenville wrote to Morton Eden on March 3, 1797, in regard to the proposals of Prussia, "It is very material to observe that the basis of this plan is the scheme of peace already offered by the allies." Dropmore, III, 298. This must mean the separation of the Netherlands from France, but coming from Prussia could not have involved an exchange for Bavaria. At this same time Prussia was urging France to be permitted to propose to Austria and to England the holding of peace conferences. France objected to any such suggestion being made to England, and repeatedly asserted that French interests demanded a continental, but not a general, peace. *Berichte von Caillard aus Berlin*, Feb. 18 and March 4, 1797. Bailieu, I, 451-453.



would have necessitated Prussia's abandonment of her neutrality. George III distrusted the Prussian court and termed its proposals "insidious advances,"\* and even Grenville himself thought an attempt was being made to weaken the strength of the alliance between Austria and England.† Nevertheless he instructed Elgin to confer freely with the ministers at Berlin, informed Thugut of the Prussian opening,‡ and outlined a plan of alliance. But the hopes aroused at this juncture were suddenly dashed to the ground when, on March 30, he received from Elgin a copy of the secret treaty of August 5, 1796, between France and Prussia.§ All expectations of a change in Prussian policy or of honor in the Prussian court were abruptly set aside, and Grenville, temporarily at least, became wholly convinced of the uselessness of further efforts in that quarter.||

The dismay aroused in England upon learning the terms of the secret treaty between Prussia and France was almost immediately increased by the news of Bonaparte's rapid and decisive victories in Italy and the Tyrol. It was evident that Austria must yield and yield soon, or experience the dishonor of a French occupation of Vienna. Even Grenville was dispirited and hopeless¶ and passively submitted to Pitt's determination to hurry an envoy to Vienna in time to take part in the peace negotiations. On April 9 it was decided by the Cabinet to send Hammond with full powers to enter into a negotiation with France and Austria.\*\* Hammond's instructions permitted him to offer France all colonies taken during the course of the war except the Cape, Ceylon, and Trinidad, and to acquiesce in any territorial arrangement on the continent acceptable to Austria.†† Thus England was at last ready to recognize the incorporation of Belgium with France, and Pitt specifically approved both this and the continued dependence of Holland on France, if only peace were secured,‡‡ while Grenville had yielded his own opinion under the first impressions created by the discouraging news from Austria. George III, recognizing Grenville's discouragement

\* George III to Pitt, Feb. 28, 1797. Stanhope, III, Appendix, p. II.

† Grenville to Elgin, March 2, 1797. Dropmore, III, 298.

‡ Grenville to Morton Eden, March 3, 1797. *Ibid.*

§ George III to Grenville *Ibid.*, 304.

¶ Grenville to Woronzow, March 30, 1797. *Ibid.*, 306.

‡ Grenville to George III, April 9, 1797. *Ibid.*, 310.

\*\* Minutes of Cabinet meeting. *Ibid.*

†† Sybel, IV, 493. The exact terms of the instructions to Hammond are in a despatch of April 11, 1797, to Sir Morton Eden, being No. 24, in volume 49 of the British Foreign Office Records for Austria. The English proposal was to keep Ceylon and the Cape from Holland, and either Martinique from France or Trinidad from Spain, and Tobago or St. Lucia from France. These terms are of interest as indicating Pitt's first decision in turning toward peace. Later he lowered these conditions very nearly to the point of demanding nothing at all.

‡‡ George III to Pitt, April 9, 1797. Stanhope, III, Appendix, p. III.



ment and knowing him to be an obstinate opponent of peace, showed plainly that he regarded Pitt as solely responsible for what was, to the King's mind, a dishonorable policy.\* Buckingham stated openly to Grenville that he preferred an honorable war to a dishonorable peace and hoped Hammond would not arrive in time to enter upon negotiations.† In reply, Grenville exhibited his own despondent attitude. "I hardly know," he wrote, "how to tell myself, under these circumstances, what I wish about Hammond's mission, because the panic here is so disgraceful that the country will not allow us to do them justice."‡

Hammond's instructions as first drawn up had looked toward the intervention of Russia as a mediator in proposing negotiations for a general peace. If on arriving at Vienna he found that time was lacking to secure such mediation, he was first to strive for a general armistice, if possible; but if this failed also, he was given full powers, in conjunction with Morton Eden, to sign a definitive peace.§ Apparently there was at first no suspicion in the English Cabinet that Hammond might find peace already concluded on his arrival at Vienna, but shortly after he had left England the belief arose that such an event was possible, and supplementary instructions were hurried after him, directing him, in case he found that Austria had signed a separate peace with France, to proceed to Berlin and there accept an offer previously made to act as mediator in a general peace. He was also to notify Russia of this act and ask her joint mediation with the court of Berlin, stating as England's reason for the step that the chief obstacle to the acceptance of the Prussian offer had now been removed by Austria's signature of a separate treaty of peace.||

On April 18, the very day this despatch was written, before Hammond had landed at Cuxhaven even, the Preliminaries of Leoben had been signed, and peace between Austria and France was an accomplished fact. Hammond went on to Vienna, but once there made no attempt to bring England into the peace, and did not disclose to Thugut his supplementary instructions for the court at Berlin.¶ In the meantime Grenville had recovered somewhat from his first depression and was striving to create a revulsion of opinion in the government. Thugut at first refused to disclose to his late ally the terms of Leoben, and

\* Stanhope, III, Appendix, pp. III ff. Several letters between George III and Pitt. The King speaks also of the "reluctance" of a portion of the Cabinet.

† April 13 and May 4, 1797. Dropmore, III, 313, 317.

‡ April 28, 1797. *Court and Cabinets*, II, 376.

§ Despatch to Morton Eden, April 11, 1797. Records, Austria, 49.

¶ Despatch to Hammond, No. 5, April 18, 1797. *Ibid.*

¶ Hammond to Grenville, May 9, 1797. Dropmore, III, 322.

although this greatly irritated Grenville,\* the latter was anxious to keep the discourtesy of Austria from the public and to uphold Austria's honor for future use. He urged this upon Woronzow, the Russian ambassador in England, writing also :

“ Quelle que soit la paix qu'on a faite, notre union n'en deviendra que plus nécessaire. Il faudra bien nous attendre pour empêcher que les principes Révolutionnaires ne deviennent le droit public de l'Europe. C'est pourquoi je désire de ménager l'honneur de la Cour de Vienne même au moment où elle paraît avoir le plus oublié ce qu'elle doit à nous et à elle-même.” †

In this connection Grenville now feared the effect upon Austria of Hammond's secondary instructions for the Prussian court. Even in the despatch outlining the acceptance of the Prussian offer of mediation Hammond had been directed to emphasize in his communications to Russia the desire of England to maintain the system of alliance with that country and with Austria “ for future security against France supposing it should be found that the Court of Vienna remains disposed to act on that principle.” ‡ Hammond himself expressed doubts of the advisability of carrying out his instructions at Berlin and decided not to open the matter there until he received further orders from England.§ Grenville thoroughly approved this violation of previous instructions, and May 26 Hammond was directed to “ avoid [at Berlin] any particular discourse or communication of the sentiments or views of His Majesty's Government but only express in general terms the King's continued readiness to lend Himself to Negotiations for general Peace in any proper manner and on such grounds as may be consistent with His Dignity and the Honour and Interests of His Crown. . . . As the greatest industry will probably be used at Berlin to discover the footing on which His Majesty stands as with respect to the House of Austria you will be particularly careful not to let any expression fall from you which may tend to commit His Majesty's Government in that respect.” || Thus Grenville, struggling against peace, was attempting to preserve the conditions essential to a possible future renewal of the coalition.

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\* George III to Grenville, May 5, 1797. Dropmore, III, 318.

† May 5, 1797. *Ibid.*, 320.

‡ Despatch to Hammond, April 18, 1797. Records, Austria, 49.

§ Hammond to Grenville, May 13, 1797. Dropmore, III, 326.

|| Despatch No. 8 to Hammond, May 26, 1797. Records, Austria, 49.

## GRENVILLE'S OPPOSITION TO THE NEGOTIATIONS AT LILLE.

MAY TO OCTOBER, 1797.

The recall of Hammond was the first step in a policy which Grenville was now determined to urge looking toward a continuance of the war. He soon found, however, that the spirit of the English ministry and nation was not sufficiently restored to support the idea of a war in isolation against France, and his preparatory efforts were brought to a full stop by the decision of the Cabinet to make a separate offer of peace. Pitt was thoroughly disheartened, and was at last determined to impose his authority in the conduct of foreign affairs.

The negotiations of 1797 brought out the final conflict of opinion between Pitt and Grenville, on the great question of war or peace, and in their progress revealed both the extent of Grenville's influence and the sources from which it was derived. The decision of the Cabinet was reached on May 31.\* Since April conditions in England had created a widespread movement for peace. The mutiny in the fleet, an army riot at Woolwich, insurrections in Ireland, the low state of the funds, the withdrawal of Grattan and his party from the Irish Parliament, and the threatened withdrawal of Fox from the English Parliament, all combined to increase the panic raised by the news of Leoben, and brought even the friends of Burke to think of peace.† In Parliament the opposition was regularly supported by double the number of members it could previously count upon, and between March 27 and June 1 five distinct motions of censure and dismissal were pressed against the government. At the same time a large body of independents under the leadership of the Earl of Moira attempted to make a coalition with the Foxites, minus Fox, in order to turn out the ministry.‡ Pitt was a sturdy political fighter, ever ready to stand up for his own opinion, but in this case his personal predilection coincided with that of his opponents, and it is therefore not surprising that after the failure of Hammond's journey he renewed overtures of peace to France. Grenville, as stubborn as ever in his opposition to peace, bent before the storm and did not object to the initial communications with France, though even from the first he was seeking to renew friendly relations with Austria in the hope that the conference which the latter was to hold with France at Berne would result in a rupture.§

\* Grenville to George III, May 31, 1797. Dropmore, III, 327.

† Sir Gilbert Elliot to Lady Elliot, May 12, 1797. "A speedy peace seems to have become extremely necessary." Elliot, II, 392.

‡ Letter from Moira to McMahon, June 15, 1797. *Parl. Hist.*, XXXIII, 1210.

§ Grenville to Stahremberg, June 2, 1797. Dropmore, III, 327.



The reply of the French Directory to the opening made by England, received on June 11, seemed to Grenville extremely insolent and its terms such as should have precluded any further negotiations. The Directory sent a passport for an English diplomat who should be "furnished with the full powers of his Britannic Majesty for the purpose of negotiating, concluding, and signing a definitive and separate treaty of peace with the French Republic . . . ." \* Thus the very conditions upon which negotiations were to be begun involved the recognition by England of the existence of the Republic—a point Grenville would have deferred until the formal conclusion of a definitive peace. But Grenville objected still more to the humiliation of England in accepting the arbitrary conditions imposed, and, though in a minority in the Cabinet, earnestly combated Pitt's purpose to send a negotiator. He was outvoted, and on June 16 he wrote to George III in regard to the proposed reply to France :

"Lord Grenville would not discharge his duty to your Majesty as an honest man or as an attached and dutiful servant if, with the opinion which he cannot help entertaining on the subject of that paper, he omitted to declare to your Majesty without reserve how it appears to him to fall both in tone and substance below what the present situation of your Majesty's kingdoms, even under all the pressure of the moment, might have entitled your Majesty's Government to assume when speaking in your Majesty's name ; and how much even the object of peace itself is endangered by a line of so much apparent weakness."

Under ordinary circumstances, Grenville stated, he would have resigned at once, but the mutiny in the fleet deterred him : "the crisis of the present hour is such that the withdrawing even of the most insignificant member of the Government might weaken it in the public opinion at a moment when every good man must wish it strengthened." † Grenville may have been honest in withholding his resignation while the mutiny in the fleet was under way ; he certainly was not sincere in the fear that the line taken by Pitt would endanger peace itself. Unquestionably the most influential motives that actuated him were the hope of so conducting negotiations as to render difficult a final agreement with France and the belief that time would restore his influence over the mind of his chief. George III, who was in entire sympathy with Grenville's opposition to peace, perfectly understood the situation. In reply to Grenville's letter, he wrote on June 17 :

"However it may be irksome to Lord Grenville to hold the pen on

\* *Parl. Hist.*, XXXIII, 911.

† Dropmore, III, 329.



this occasion, I must feel at this particular moment his remaining in his situation absolutely essential, for he will be able to stave off many farther humiliations that might be attempted from having shown a mind jealous of what seems in the outset an attempt to draw us into future embarrassments." \*

Unlike previous similar contests, the struggle in the Cabinet was this time generally known in political circles, and surmises were frequent as to the exact attitude of each member.† Meanwhile Austria had finally informed England of the terms of Leoben,‡ but Grenville was unable to use this to restore confidence in Austria, for the entire Cabinet, Grenville included, was angered by Thugut's doubts of Austria's ability to repay the loans advanced during the war.§ Grenville was thus forced to fight his battle on the merits of the French negotiation, separate and distinct from any other question of foreign policy or alliance.

Malmesbury was again the negotiator selected by Pitt, and he set out for Lille, where the conferences were to be held, fully convinced that Pitt was thoroughly in earnest in his proposals and that this time the concessions he was instructed to offer to France would speedily result in a treaty of peace.|| Pitt and his protégé, Canning, were equally hopeful,¶ and Pitt had given Malmesbury full powers to sign without reference to London, if the English terms were accepted.\*\* The exact extent to which the English government was prepared to go cannot be stated authoritatively, but it seems probable that in compensation for French acquisitions in Belgium, Germany, and Italy, Pitt would have demanded, in the last resort, no more than Ceylon.†† Malmesbury's first offer to the French negotiators specified also the Cape of Good

\* Dropmore, III, 330.

† Elliot wrote to Lady Elliot June 17, 1797: "Pitt differs with Lord Grenville and Dundas with both; in short, all is in great confusion." Elliot, II, 408. Later Elliot thought Dundas occupying middle ground between Pitt and Grenville in holding out for the retention of the Cape and Ceylon, which Pitt would have yielded. *Ibid.*, 410.

‡ Grenville to Woronzow, June 17, 1797. Dropmore, III, 331.

§ Grenville to Stahremberg, July 4, 1797. *Ibid.*, 332.

|| Of Malmesbury's going to Lille, the editor of Malmesbury's memoirs says: "Lord Grenville was decidedly opposed to this step, and long argued it with Pitt; but the latter remained firm, repeatedly declaring that it was his duty as an English Minister and a Christian, to use every effort to stop so bloody and wasting a war. He sent Lord Malmesbury to Lisle with the assurance that 'he (Pitt) would stifle every feeling of pride to the utmost to produce the desired result;' and Lord Malmesbury himself went upon his Mission, anxious to close his public life by an act which would spare so much misery, and restore so much happiness to mankind." Malmesbury, III, 369.

¶ Canning to Leigh, July 12, 1797. *Ibid.*, 393.

\*\* Malmesbury to Pitt, July 6, 1797. *Ibid.*, 378.

†† While not definitely stated anywhere in the documents and memoirs pertaining to Lille, the indirect references to terms bear this out. See also *Maret*, 210, and Rose, I, 189.

Hope, Cochín, and Trinidad, but this was met on the part of France by the presentation of a note involving three preliminary points which it was asserted the English government must yield before any other questions were raised. These were the renunciation of the ancient claim to France included in the King's title, the restoration of the ships seized at Toulon or the payment of a satisfactory indemnity, and the release of all claim to the revenues of the Netherlands founded on the English loan to Austria. The latter point was of no importance, for the English loan was based on the revenues of the Austrian Empire, not, as the French supposed, on those of the Netherlands alone.\* Nor is it probable that the first and second points would ever have been permitted to stand in the way of a final treaty; but the annoyance felt because of the French demand for a preliminary concession by England aroused a feeling of irritation in the Cabinet and encouraged Grenville to believe that peace might yet be averted. While he was careful to write privately to Malmesbury in such terms as to indicate a personal desire for peace, the undercurrent of feeling evident in his letters and the haughty tone of his official despatches evince his real sentiments. Keenly alive to every shift of political opinion in England, he now sought to hold Pitt to his original instructions to Malmesbury, in the hope that these, if adhered to, would prevent the completion of a treaty. A few days later Grenville's position was strengthened by an assertion on the part of the French negotiators that they were unable to discuss the colonial acquisitions desired by England, inasmuch as the Directory had pledged itself in a treaty with Holland "not to surrender Dutch colonies without the consent of the Dutch government."† In regard to the three points, Grenville at once wrote to Malmesbury that the French opening did not seem favorable to peace,‡ but Canning, who did not take the French demands seriously, wrote to Ellis:

"Which of us is there that does not feel it grating to have to contrive modes of concession, instead of enforcing the justice of demands? . . . But we cannot and must not disguise our situation from ourselves. If peace is to be had, we must have it; I firmly believe we must, and it is a belief that strengthens every day. . . . But though I preach peace thus violently, do not imagine that I am ready to take any that you may offer. . . . Give us then something to shew as an acquisition but remember . . . that what may be very splendid as an acquisition, would be very insufficient as a

\* Grenville to Malmesbury, July 13, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 394.

† Fitzpatrick's introduction to Dropmore, III, xlviii-1. This presents a very clearly stated and compact résumé of the negotiations at Lille.

‡ Grenville to Malmesbury, July 13, 1797. *Ibid.*, 333.

cause of quarrel. We can break off upon nothing but what will rouse us from sleep and stupidity into a new life and action, what 'will create a soul under the ribs of death!' for we are now soul-less and spiritless; and what would, do this, except the defence of Portugal . . . or the preservation of our integrity, . . . I know not. All beyond this we shall like to have, but we never shall fight for it." \*

In spite of this readiness to concede all, the immediate effect of the French stand on the question of the Dutch colonies was to stiffen the attitude of the English government. On July 20, a week after the letter just quoted, Canning wrote to Malmesbury that, if the French remained fixed in the determination to refuse any Dutch colony and remained also as offensive in their manner of stating it, the negotiations would have to terminate,† while Grenville, in much more vigorous language, stated the same opinion.‡

Grenville now not only exhibited greater hauteur in his official communications, but also began actively to combat Pitt in the Cabinet. A source of strength to Pitt was the public disinclination to continue the war. Grenville discovered that the events of the negotiation were known in London almost as soon as received by the ministers,§ and proposed in the Cabinet a vote imposing secrecy upon its members. This was passed and, according to Canning, "was devised by Lord Grenville to *tie up Pitt's tongue alone*, whom he suspected of communicating with other persons, and fortifying himself with out-of-door opinions against the opinions which might be brought forward in Council by those with whom he differed in his general view of the Negotiation. I am not sure that he did not suspect him further of sounding the public sentiment through the newspapers as to the terms which it might be proper to accept, and the concessions which it might be excusable to make for the sake of peace." || Grenville had in fact secured a tactical victory over Pitt. Every resolution of the Cabinet that involved a decision not wholly agreeable to Pitt was a step toward Grenville's resumption of influence. So also every event that increased the impression of French insolence and of English humiliation was magnified by Grenville in his effort to renew the courage of the English government, and in this connection Malmesbury had unwittingly assisted the war party in the Cabinet, for he had dwelt much

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\* July 13, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 396. Ellis was Malmesbury's right-hand man at Lille and was a close friend of Canning's. Thus Pitt and Malmesbury were in close touch through their younger intimates.

† *Ibid.*, 416.

‡ Grenville to Malmesbury, July 20, 1797. Dropmore, III, 333.

§ *Ibid.*

|| Canning to Malmesbury, July 20, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 416.



in his despatches upon the excessive character of the French demands and had forwarded those demands in such order as to create a steadily increasing irritation with the insolence displayed. The report forwarded to London of the three preliminary stipulations made by France, followed almost immediately by the French refusal to consider the cession of any Dutch colony, had resulted in a victory for Grenville in the Cabinet. Pitt did not openly assert that he was ready to make peace under the extreme conditions proposed by France, but he opposed stating immediately to France that these conditions were inadmissible. Grenville urged an immediate reply notifying France that such conditions, if insisted on, would render a treaty impossible, and his opinion prevailed. The defeat of Pitt and the anxiety felt among the friends of peace is clearly brought out in a letter from Canning to Ellis, in which the former blames Malmesbury for the character of the despatches stating the French demands and for having sent them without delay to England. "The second messenger," he wrote, "was despatched too soon, and brought the proposition of the Directory in a shape in which it was the most difficult to discuss it."\* To this Ellis indignantly replied: "If I understood Mr. Pitt right, you want either a tolerably good peace, or the most unreasonable requisitions,"† thus defending the despatches in question on the ground that they conformed to the latter consideration. Canning's rejoinder unveiled the controversy in the Cabinet. Referring again to Malmesbury's immediate transmittal of the French demands and its unfortunate consequence, he wrote:

"You will, however, have understood, that what I said upon that point belonged rather to the state of things *here* than that at Lisle—to the triumph procured by the particular discussion to those whom I wish not to triumph, over *those* to whom I wish to maintain an *ascendancy*, which they have so recently obtained, and of which I am not yet sure that they have more than a precarious and temporary possession; and, upon my conscience, I believe the safety and welfare of the country hereafter to be involved in their maintenance and exercise of this ascendancy. And, though I am not so unreasonable as to wish or expect that the great work about which you are employed can be squared in the whole, or altogether in any one part, with a view to circumstances of this nature at home, yet I do not think it an inconsiderable object to soften as much as can be done, without hazarding truth and substance, the roughnesses of the work to be done here to those who are deter-

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\* Ellis to Canning, July 25, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 430. Ellis quotes the phrase from Canning's letter, but the letter itself is not to be found.

† *Ibid.*



mined to go through with it; and to give as little opportunity as can be helped to those who hate the work to revile the master workman." \*

In spite, therefore, of the nature of the instructions last sent to Malmesbury, Pitt still proposed to fulfil his original intentions, and waited only for that lowering of the demands of France, of which he felt confident, to reimpose his authority upon the English Cabinet. Whatever the wavering of his fellow-ministers, Pitt himself had not as yet yielded his belief in the necessity of peace or increased the limited concessions he was prepared to ask from France. Outwardly the relations of Pitt and Grenville rested upon their customary basis of cordial coöperation; in reality they were in opposition, and their intercourse lacked that friendly character which had formerly constituted so large a part of Grenville's influence.

England's refusal to acquiesce in the French demands was presented by Malmesbury at Lille on July 25, and upon its becoming evident that France would not abate one jot of her pretensions, the negotiation stood in danger of coming to a full stop and even to a rupture; but in these circumstances Maret, one of the three French diplomats at Lille, acting through a friend, Pein, who entered into friendly conferences with the English secretary of the mission, George Ellis, sought and arrived at a private understanding with Malmesbury. Maret explained that no further proposals could be made by the French representatives at Lille until the issue of a bitter conflict then secretly waging in the government at Paris was clear. Of the five members of the Directory, Barras, Rewbell, and Larévellière-Lépeaux, aided by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Delacroix, were opposed to peace. The two remaining members, Carnot and Barthélemy, supported by a majority of the Councils, were in favor of a fair arrangement with England, and, if in the result this party should gain the control of affairs, Maret believed that pressure would be put on Holland to force an acquiescence in the cession of some, if not all, of the colonies captured by England during the progress of the war.† Maret also stated that the first move of the Carnot party would be the substitution of Talleyrand for Delacroix

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\* Canning to Ellis, July 27, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 437.

† Ernouf, the author of *Maret, Duc de Bassano*, makes no reference to the secret portion of Maret's labors at Lille, yet the book was published after the Malmesbury diary. Sybel also passes over this feature in silence, though giving as a principal foot-note reference "Malmesbury, III." Maret's honest desire for peace is unquestioned, for it is proved by his letter to Barras urging that policy (in *Maret, Duc de Bassano*), and also by Barras's dislike and suspicion of Maret (Barras, II, 263). Barras's *Memoirs* at this period are concerned chiefly with the details of the struggle in Paris and touch but incidentally on foreign affairs, but where these are mentioned they show that the Directory had no thought of making peace on any terms, and was in fact displeased with the attitude of its representatives at Lille.

in the Department of Foreign Affairs. Malmesbury was convinced of Maret's honesty and advised his government to await the issue of the struggle at Paris. All knowledge of Maret's disclosures and of the frequent communications which passed between Malmesbury and Maret during the ensuing month was, at the suggestion of Canning, kept from the English Cabinet, Pitt and Grenville alone being cognizant of what was taking place. Canning's avowed reason for this secrecy was the necessity of protecting Maret's good name,\* but, in the light of his letter to Ellis, it seems reasonable to suppose that he had also in view the prevention of a recurrence of those acrimonious debates in the Cabinet which had lately resulted in a temporary victory for Grenville. If so, his plan, while successful in the direct object sought, was hazardous in its effect upon the main question of peace, for it necessitated a renewal of that personal and private intercourse between Grenville and Pitt which recent events had tended to prevent.

While the negotiations at Lille were thus delayed until some solution was reached at Paris, it was still necessary to preserve the usual diplomatic forms of a conference, and in forwarding instructions to Malmesbury Grenville clearly revealed his opposition to peace. Although acknowledging the probability that Maret was dealing honestly with Malmesbury,† he wrote the latter on August 18 :

"I greatly doubt whether the period of peace is yet arrived. There seems so much insolence, and such an overbearing opinion of their own consequence and power even among those who profess themselves the best disposed, that I fear it will be impossible yet to obtain such terms as we must require."‡

His language in communicating with the King, of whose sympathy he felt confident, was more open. As to what terms of peace might be expected if Maret's plan was successful, he wrote on August 4 :

"It appears however that nothing had passed on that head beyond the general expression of reasonable terms, and an implied concession that your Majesty was entitled to some compensation, but without intimating anything of its nature or amount. Lord Grenville does not therefore flatter himself that much more results from this communica-

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\* Canning to Grenville, July 31, 1797. Dropmore, III, 337. By the plan followed, Malmesbury's despatches used numerals for names, in mentioning Maret and others whom Maret employed in communicating with Malmesbury, and they are thus given in the Dropmore MSS. But the actual names were long ago printed in Malmesbury's diary. The King was aware of and consented to the withholding of these despatches from the rest of the Cabinet. *Ibid.*, 343. Malmesbury himself saw no reason for such secrecy, though he wished to protect Maret. Malmesbury to Canning, Aug. 14, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 465.

† Grenville to Malmesbury, Aug. 9, 1797. Dropmore, III, 352.

‡ *Ibid.*, 356.

tion than that the moderate party were desirous to prevent the negotiation from being abruptly terminated pending the struggle at Paris ; but, if they should succeed, there seems no sufficient ground to rely on their being actuated by any other disposition for peace than what would arise from a motive to the operation of which their adversaries would, under the like circumstances, be equally, or even more exposed, the great difficulty which they would find in continuing the war." \*

Pitt, however, was hopeful, basing his expectations upon Malmesbury's confidence in Maret's integrity, and for a month longer the negotiation waited upon the turn of events in Paris. Malmesbury, on his part, sought to follow Canning's injunctions in regard to the conflict in the English Cabinet, going so far even as to conceal such parts of Ellis's conversations with Pein as departed from a stiff maintenance of English demands,† and writing on August 14 : " This messenger will not, I think, carry over any materials for a Cabinet discussion." ‡

Malmesbury's precautions were unavailing, for an unexpected event soon revived the conflict of opinion in England, and in its consequences almost convinced Malmesbury himself that Pitt was yielding to the influence of the war party. Malmesbury learned August 12 that a treaty between France and Portugal had been signed at Paris by which Portugal agreed to assume a position of neutrality in any war between France and England, and not to permit more than six ships of either nation in her ports during the continuance of that war.§ This treaty was disavowed when it was forwarded to Lisbon, but in the meantime it had greatly angered the English government. Grenville instructed

\* Dropmore, III, 343.

† The reports sent to England, of the conversations between Ellis and Pein, and later between Malmesbury and Maret, are given in Dropmore. Comparing these with the reports made by Ellis to Malmesbury (as given in Malmesbury), it is evident that the accounts sent to Grenville were carefully edited. In the following illustration the portions enclosed in parentheses were in the original report by Ellis to Malmesbury, while the report as actually sent to Grenville is to be read by omitting the enclosed portions. Ellis said " that the Cape (I was very sure, was not an object of profit to any nation ; that it was necessary, like Ceylon, for the preservation of our territory ; and that, from the little I had heard on the subject, I saw no reason for believing that we attached such importance to it as to let it stand in the way of the attainment of any great national object, but that it) was ours at present, and that he had not heard a shadow of reason why we should part with it. Lastly, that our demand of Cochin was only in return for Negapatnam, which was, he conceived, of much higher value to the Dutch. Here le Pein said, (with much eagerness, " Vous m'étonnez beaucoup. Oh,) si vous vouliez rendre le Cap, je suis bien persuadé qu'il ne tiendrait qu'à vous de signer la paix dans quinze jours." Malmesbury, III, 470-471, and Dropmore, III, 348. It is evident that the omissions in the report to Grenville were made solely because the full conversation would have given ground for a new controversy with Pitt. Many such omissions are found by comparing Malmesbury and the Dropmore MSS., and most of them were made for similar reasons.

‡ Malmesbury to Canning. Malmesbury, III, 465.

§ Malmesbury to Grenville, Aug. 14, 1797. *Ibid.*, 461.



Malmesbury that England could not submit to any such stipulation, and that articles in regard to it must be inserted in the treaty to be signed at Lille.\* At the same time Grenville exhibited resentment to a published declaration by the Directory to the effect that England was delaying peace negotiations, and ordered Malmesbury to hand in a formal note demanding an explanation. The instructions in both of these cases revealed a temper and an attitude little likely to be of aid in procuring peace. Pitt also wrote to Malmesbury in regard to the Portuguese treaty in much the same sense as had Grenville, but in gentler language.† He made no mention, however, of the Directory's declaration. Malmesbury ventured to disobey his instructions, in that he did not present a formal note of complaint, but merely talked over with the French negotiators the declaration in question.‡ He was also greatly vexed at the stand taken by England in regard to the Portuguese treaty, thinking that the consideration of it might well have been delayed in the interests of the conference at Lille. On August 29 he wrote to Canning, "I consider the Portuguese peace, from the manner in which it has been taken up, as an event very likely to break off the Negotiation,"§ and Canning himself was of the same opinion.||

Malmesbury in fact could no longer remain blind to the change taking place in the temper of the English government and wrote again to Canning on the same day :

"You must have perceived that the instructions and opinions I get from the Minister *under whose orders I am bound to act*, accord so little with the sentiments and intentions I heard expressed by the Minister *with whom I wish to act*, that I am placed in a very disagreeable dilemma. If I do not conform to my instructions, I am guilty of diplomatic mutiny ; if I do strictly and up to the letter of them, I am guilty of what is worse, by lending myself to promote a measure I think essentially wrong."¶

He then states that he is of course perfectly ready to resign his own opinion as to the best method of securing peace, and declares :

"But if another opinion has been allowed to prevail—if the *real* end is to differ from the *ostensible* one—and if I am only to remain here, *in order to break off the Negotiation creditably, and not to terminate it successfully*, I then, instead of resigning my opinion, must resign my

\* Aug. 19, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 489.

† Aug. 19, 1797. *Ibid.*, 491.

‡ Malmesbury to Grenville and to Canning, Aug. 22, 1797. *Ibid.*, 494, 497.

§ *Ibid.*, 512.

|| *Ibid.*, 516.

¶ The language of Grenville's despatches had, in fact, convinced the French Directory that England did not desire peace. Barras, II, 520.



office. . . . I hope, after all, I may be wrong in my misgivings, and that the war party in the Cabinet have not *surprised the religion* of the pacific one." \*

Malmesbury was in a state of excited distrust not customary with him, for on the same day, August 29, he wrote still a third letter to Canning: "For Heaven's sake, do not let the only person in England, perhaps in Europe, who seeing right can act with effect, be seduced to wander from the principle he laid down two months ago." That these letters were intended for Pitt's eye is shown by the concluding sentence: "I never object to anything being shewn to *Pitt* . . . . I do not write to him, because I could say nothing I have not said to you." † Three days later Malmesbury talked the matter over with Ellis and noted in his diary Pitt's "weakness in regard to Lord Grenville." ‡

Although the policy of the war party in the English Cabinet was not yet predominant to the extent feared by Malmesbury, it was at least so far victorious as to render Pitt unwilling to risk a direct challenge of authority. On August 29 Canning informed Malmesbury that an official approval of his violation of instructions in not handing in a formal note of complaint to the French negotiators would have been sent to him "if I had been quite sure myself, or if the one person with whom I consulted upon the subject could have answered it to me, that a thorough approbation of this omission would be given . . . . I vehemently feared, and so did my opposite neighbour [Pitt], § that the warlike spirit was too strong in that quarter [Grenville's] to expect a perfect acquiescence." || It is thus evident that though Grenville was still hampered by the controversy with Austria as to the payment of the loans, ¶ he had succeeded in forming a party in the Cabinet stoutly antagonistic to peace, and one whose strength was daily increasing. The temper of the country was also steadily rising, and there is some reason for thinking that Pitt, recognizing his weakness in the Cabinet, had already determined to sacrifice his opinion to Grenville's. Malmesbury's three letters of August 29 must have reached London by September 4, at the latest, \*\* and, had Pitt now been in earnest to fulfil his first instructions to Malmesbury, it is certainly presumable that either he or Canning would have hastened to relieve Malmesbury's uncertainty and agitation. Pitt did finally write to Malmesbury on September 11 that "on the

\* Malmesbury, III, 517.

† *Ibid.*, 518.

‡ *Ibid.*, 521.

§ Pitt and Canning lived in opposite houses on the same street.

|| Malmesbury, III, 520.

¶ Grenville to Morton Eden, Sept. 8, 1797. Dropmore, III, 369.

\*\* The time usually required in transit was from two to four days.

main points in question in the Negotiation my opinions remain *unalterably* what I stated to you in our last *conversation*; that, on that line, I shall *at all events* act, and that *collateral* difficulties may, I think, always be overcome by a mixture of firmness and temper."\* And again on September 14 he wrote to Malmesbury: "On all material points in the whole of your negotiation, my opinion will remain unaltered (though my hopes are rather more sanguine), and my ultimate determination will be what I think you know."† These letters would constitute excellent evidence of Pitt's firmness of determination, if it were not for the fact that between the probable date of the receipt of Malmesbury's letters, September 3 or 4, and the date of Pitt's first letter, September 11, news had reached London of the conclusion of the struggle in Paris in the overthrow on September 4 of the peace faction, and the victory of Barras, Rewbell, and the war party.‡ If Maret's analysis of the situation was correct, and of this neither Malmesbury nor Pitt had any doubt, all hope of peace through the negotiations at Lille was destroyed by the *coup d'état* of the 18th Fructidor in Paris. Moreover, the hope expressed by Pitt in his letter of September 14 referred to a secret negotiation unknown to Malmesbury, in which Pitt believed the way open to the purchase of a favorable peace by the bribery of Barras, and not to any confidence felt in the probable outcome at Lille. In the light of Pitt's failure to reply to Malmesbury until after the knowledge of events in Paris had reached him, his letters seem indeed the assertions of a man who, knowing his original plan defeated, was yet, owing to an event foreign to the ground upon which that defeat had been sustained, fortunately able to assert the fixity and integrity of his purpose.

The new government in Paris quickly brought the negotiation at Lille to an end. Maret and his colleagues were at once recalled, and two new negotiators appeared in their stead with a demand so insolent and extreme that Malmesbury had no other option than to refuse it. Ignoring the results of all previous conferences, the new French diplomats insisted that as a preliminary to any negotiation whatever, Malmesbury must state explicitly whether or not he was "authorized to treat on the principle of a *general restitution of every possession remaining in His Majesty's hands, not only belonging to them [the French], but to their Allies.*"§ An immediate answer was required, and Malmesbury, recog-

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\* Malmesbury, III, 554.

† *Ibid.*, 560.

‡ The news reached London by September 9, at least. See Malmesbury to Grenville, Sept. 9, 1797, and Grenville to Malmesbury, Sept. 11, 1797. Dropmore, III, 370, 372.

§ Malmesbury to Grenville, Sept. 17, 1797. Malmesbury, III, 562.

nizing the futility of further pacific overtures, sought merely to direct the conferences into such a channel as would display the honor and dignity of his government to the disadvantage of France. In this, thanks to his superiority in diplomatic maneuvering, he was entirely successful and forced the French diplomats to state their proposals in terms most unreasonable and in manner most offensive, while English honor and sincerity were sustained in Malmesbury's proud refusal to disclose his instructions. Grenville was elated at this outcome, writing to Buckingham, "The Directory have done everything they could to play our game." \* Malmesbury, on his arrival in England, was surprised to find a complete change in the temper of the public, and that in the Cabinet nearly every one rejoiced † that the negotiations had been broken off, while Pitt himself seemed relieved. ‡ Malmesbury was convinced by several conversations with Grenville that he had been correct in his early suspicion of Grenville's attitude, and that the latter was "invariably against peace from the beginning." §

#### THE SECRET PROPOSAL OF PEACE.

AUGUST 10 TO OCTOBER, 1797.

During the period immediately subsequent to Maret's secret proposals of delay, another and still more secret negotiation was begun in London. In this also Grenville, exhibiting now grudging acquiescence, now stubborn refusal, played an important part in determining the final outcome. The London proposal apparently had no connection whatever with that of Maret at Lille, save as the French agents employed in the former made use of their knowledge of what was taking place at Lille to convince Pitt of their relations with the French government and hence of their ability to sell peace to England. Before Malmesbury left England a man named Potter had suggested to the government in London that peace on favorable terms to England might be assured if a secret bribe were paid to certain members of the Directory. Potter claimed to be authorized to conduct such a transaction, but his offer was not seriously considered. Later, on August 22,

\* Sept. 20, 1797. *Court and Cabinets*, II, 383.

† Malmesbury's diary, Sept. 20, 1797. *Malmesbury*, III, 580.

‡ Sept. 27, 1797. *Ibid.*, 591.

§ Oct. 4, 1797. *Ibid.*, 595. Lord Ashburton, in writing of these events in 1845, speaks of "the desponding view of affairs taken both by him [Pitt] and Canning, checked by the dogged obstinacy of Grenville." Croker, II, 238.

Malmesbury wrote a long letter to Grenville,\* describing a visit paid him by one Melville, who brought forward a similar suggestion, stating that he was acting for Barras, but who also, like Potter, could not produce any proof of the authenticity of his offer. Malmesbury thought these overtures were but intrigues in some stock-jobbing operation, yet considered them of sufficient importance to report them in detail to Grenville. He also received from Maret the information that both Barras and Rewbell were venal,† though Maret did not believe Melville authorized to make the proposal in question. Melville proceeded to London and there laid his project before Pitt himself.‡ Pitt was at first suspicious, but becoming convinced that Melville was really commissioned by Barras, wrote Grenville to that effect,§ and wrote also to the King on September 6, saying :

"The sum he names is a very large one, amounting to four hundred and fifty thousand pounds ; but it seems not to be more than would be wisely employed if he can make good what he proposes as the condition previous to its being paid, namely, that the treaty shall be signed and ratified without delay, leaving this country in possession of the Cape, Ceylon, Cochin, and Trinidad, and exacting nothing in return. . . . The sum might without material difficulty, it is conceived, be supplied in part from the territorial revenues of India, and the remainder from secret service, without the necessity of ever disclosing the transaction." ||

Pitt proposed to conduct this remarkable transaction through the medium of Malmesbury at Lille, but before the arrangement could be perfected the rupture of negotiations at that place had occurred. Grenville appears to have had no connection as yet with these overtures, except that he was kept informed of them by Pitt. Probably he did not choose to oppose them, because he did not believe them to be authentic, but when later in September an offer of a similar nature came through a much more responsible channel, he was roused to state his disapproval and to use his skill in criticism. Melville's offer had included so large a concession to England as to seem preposterous. The offer that now came through Boyd, a prominent banker, was limited to a cession of Ceylon and the Cape, while the bribe demanded was increased to £2,000,000, or £1,200,000 for Ceylon alone.¶ Pitt could not hope to withdraw secretly so large a sum from the revenues, and

\* Dropmore, III, 356.

† Malmesbury to Grenville, Aug. 22, 1797. *Ibid.*, 358.

‡ Pitt to Grenville, Aug. 28, 1797. *Ibid.*, 360.

§ Sept. 2, 1797. *Ibid.*, 368.

|| *Ibid.*, 369.

¶ The letters in Dropmore, considered alone, have caused the editor of the MSS. to confuse slightly two distinct offers. See letter quoted, p. 69, note \*, from Stanhope.



stated to the King that he had "distinctly explained to the person through whom the proposal comes, that enough must be stated to Parliament, in order to procure the grant of the money, to satisfy them that it was really employed for secret service on the Continent, with a view to the settlement of peace."\* On October 7 the affair had reached a point where Pitt, acting with Dundas, but with no other member of the Cabinet, despatched to Paris a virtual acceptance of the proposal. On the same day Pitt informed Grenville that "the offer (if it is real) seemed both to Dundas and me so tempting, and the time pressed so much to an hour (lest an answer should be given in the interval to our last note which would preclude all chance) that we did not hesitate to desire Boyd to write to his correspondent immediately to the purport of the enclosed memorandum."† Grenville immediately replied: "I cannot deny to you that the whole of that transaction is so disagreeable to my mind that I am very glad to have been saved the necessity of deciding upon it." He then, while not specifically opposing the purchase of peace, further states his own feeling:

"I shudder at what we are doing, and believe in my conscience that, if this country could but be brought to think so, it would be ten thousand times safer (and cheaper too, which they seem to consider above all other things) to face the storm, than to shrink from it. And above all I dread the loss of consideration which must, I fear, infallibly result from any mode of *purchasing* our safety, and such this is, and will be felt to be, let us say or do what we will."‡

Having thus expressed his own convictions, Grenville brought forward in the same letter a criticism of the terms of the memorandum so hastily forwarded by Pitt through Boyd. He pointed out in particular that the memorandum promised that Malmesbury would be sent back to Lille, "with no other security for his future treatment than results from the private understanding established," and that, in case of the very possible failure to conclude peace, this could but result in humiliation and dishonor to England. He urged then, as all-essential to any public renewal of negotiations, some public official declaration from France to enable Malmesbury to return to Lille. The point was well taken, and Pitt at once recognized its importance, while time and reflection made him less inclined to hasty action.§ When, therefore, on October 17, a reply to Pitt's memorandum arrived at London still secretly promising all that was desired, but still unaccompanied

\* Pitt to George III, Sept. 22, 1797. Stanhope, III, Appendix, p. vii.

† Dropmore, III, 377.

‡ Oct. 8, 1797. *Ibid.*, 378.

§ Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 13, 1797. *Ibid.*, 380.

by any "ostensible act on the part of the French Government to justify Lord M[almesbury]'s return," the exact point upon which Lord Grenville had insisted, Pitt altogether lost confidence in the intrigue and urged Grenville to hasten the preparation of a public résumé of the negotiations at Lille.\*

From this time no further thought was given to ideas of peace, but every energy was directed toward a vigorous preparation for national defense and the continuation of the war. Though the actual result of the negotiations at Lille had been decided rather by the outcome of the conflict in Paris than by any decided change in Pitt's own sentiments, Grenville, by his sturdy opposition and skillful maneuvering, had prevented Pitt from expanding his original concessions to France, had saved him from a dangerous trap in the secret overtures, and had revived the spirit of the Cabinet. The dignity and honor with which England emerged from the negotiations, due primarily to the proud tone of Grenville's official despatches, proved of great service to the government both in Parliament and with the public. Pitt's ministry was never stronger. Grenville quietly resumed his former predominance in the determination of foreign policy, while the old conditions of friendly intercourse and confidence with his chief were at once renewed.

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\* Pitt to Grenville, Oct. 18, 1797. Dropmore, III, 381. It is stated by Stanhope (III, 61) that the offers came from Barras, but no sufficient proof of this has ever been produced. In Barras's *Memoirs* (II, 576) mention is made of "Potter the Englishman" who has just come from London, July 20, 1797. Potter seems to have been a French spy. Such a man was hardly likely to have been entrusted with the offer in question. Maret believed Melville to be of like character, and a mere intriguer, planning things he had no authority to propose. Malmesbury to Grenville, Aug. 22, 1797. Dropmore, III, 356. The offer through Boyd bore more marks of authenticity, because of the character of the person employed, but taken all together no positive assertion that Barras was implicated is possible.

## THE RESULTS OF GRENVILLE'S VICTORY.

Malmesbury's estimate of the changed sentiment of the English nation was not a mistaken one. The résumé of the Lille negotiations, drawn up by Grenville and presented to Parliament November 3, was received with favor,\* and the government now bent all its energies toward preparation for a continuance of the war with France. An address to the throne, November 8, pledged the British nation to unremitting hostility to the expansion of French power, and in the attendant debate Grenville stood forward as the great champion of patriotic England. His speech † contained no word of regret for the failure of peace negotiations; he rejoiced, rather, that now at last all men must see the desperate determination of France to overthrow the constitution and law of England. Pitt's speech in the Commons on November 10 was much less vigorous; but while "lamenting and deploring" the failure to secure peace, he acknowledged that he had gone too far in his original offer to France and explicitly stated that he could not now regard that peace as honorable which involved a retrocession of all that England had acquired.‡ The address to the throne was passed in both houses without division § and was soon followed by the preparation of measures intended to arouse the inherent patriotism of the people, to appeal to the nation in fact as France had appealed to its people, but on different lines and for a different purpose. The organization of the volunteer forces was the first step which was taken in this direction, and its great popularity furnished excellent proof of the political wisdom of Grenville's stubborn opposition to peace. In his own department Grenville resumed his customary activity in diplomatic correspondence, interest in which had lagged during the negotiations at Lille.

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\* *Parl. Hist.*, XXXIII, 906-962. This résumé contained most of the official despatches and correspondence relating to Lille, but omitted all mention of the part played by Maret.

† *Ibid.*, 979.

‡ *Ibid.*, 987-1025. Pitt was disturbed and chagrined by a preceding speech by Earl Temple, Buckingham's son and Grenville's nephew, who, posing as an independent, rejoiced that the negotiation had been broken off, and approved "of those measures which have been taken, when we were in the scrape, to extricate us from it" (p. 995). This had importance solely because of Temple's relationship with Grenville, and Pitt devoted a good part of his own speech to denying that any such measures had been taken.

§ Fox and Sheridan were still absenting themselves from Parliament.

With the disappearance of the probability of peace, new overtures were made to Russia and received from her.\* The death of Frederick William II and the accession of a new monarch in Berlin created temporary hopes of a change in Prussian sentiment.† Even Austria hinted at a renewal of alliance with England.‡ In other and more positive ways the English position was greatly improved. The naval mutiny was over, and Duncan's victory off Camperdown, October 11, had revived the confidence of England in her warfare at sea. New French attempts on Ireland and risings in England itself had alike proved abortive. The crop prospects were unusually favorable. The very reaction from the first wave of panic tended to arouse the nation and to restore its vigor. It needed but some aggressive act of the French government to create that unanimity of English opinion for which Grenville hoped, and this France did not long delay to supply. In January, 1798, the government of Holland was remodeled to suit the new conditions in France; in February the Papal States were attacked, while in April occurred the most irritating blow of all and the one least possible of defense by the partisans of peace, when France overthrew the ancient constitution of Switzerland and practically incorporated that country within her own frontiers. At the same time the opposition in Parliament lost its vigor and cohesion. Fox and Sheridan, who had been absenting themselves from Parliament for some months past, and thus protesting against the "arbitrary conduct of the government," resumed their seats in December, 1797, for the purpose of attacking Pitt's new tax scheme, but found their arguments considered unpatriotic in the light of these new French aggressions. On April 22 Sheridan, moved thereto by the attack upon Switzerland, came forward in a brilliant speech, in which he acknowledged that the defense of England must now take precedence over every other question. Fox more slowly and much later reached the same decision. For the moment there was no essential opposition to Pitt's government. Parliament and nation alike were united by a wave of patriotic enthusiasm for war.§

After April, 1798, the policy of the English government was, as Pitt in his speech of November 10, 1797, had himself asserted, fixed in the

\* Woronzow to Grenville, Nov. 10 and Dec. 12, 1797. Dropmore, III, 391, 403.

† George III to Grenville, Dec. 23, 1797, and Grenville to George III, Dec. 29, 1797. *Ibid.*, 405, 407.

‡ Woronzow to Grenville, Nov. 17, 1797, and Grenville to George III, Dec. 29, 1797. *Ibid.*, 395, 407.

§ Even Miles thought war now justifiable, writing to Nicholls on April 10, 1798, "France leaves us no alternative between ruinous dishonorable concession and eternal warfare." Miles, II, 293.



determination not to consent to a peace that did not permit the retention by England of some of her conquests during the progress of the war. This was based on the theory that compensations were due for the continental acquisitions of France. The definite adoption of that policy, from which Pitt did not thereafter waver, was due in fully as great a degree to the long-continued insistence of Grenville as to the aggressions of France. Its maintenance was a victory for Grenville and constitutes the best general evidence of his later influence. Thus the conclusion of the negotiation at Lille furnishes a logical halting place in an examination of Grenville's importance in English foreign policy, for with that event Grenville's advice, hitherto alternately accepted and discarded, became a permanent determining factor. Grenville's war policy became Pitt's policy, and as such has been regarded in history as the most distinguished feature of Pitt's administration.

Reviewing briefly the conditions of Grenville's influence, it appears that the inception of his importance in foreign affairs was due to the opportunities of service that came to him from his intimacy and personal friendship with Pitt. The ability and wisdom with which he conducted isolated diplomatic missions led Pitt to repose a large confidence in his general diplomatic intelligence and to respect his suggestions on broad questions of foreign policy. Until 1791, then, Grenville acted in the capacity of private adviser to his chief, but was in no sense determining the line of policy pursued. After that date—taking office on a sharp and distinct reversal of a former project, the armed intervention in the Turkish war—Grenville, who more than any other one person was responsible for the adoption of peaceful measures, assumed the control and directed the business of the Foreign Office. Thus the isolation of England from 1791 to 1793 was largely the result of Grenville's influence.

Before the outbreak of war with France no difference of opinion arose within the English Cabinet, for both Pitt and Grenville believed in the possibility and in the wisdom of neutrality; but as it became evident that war was inevitable, Grenville was less dismayed than Pitt at the prospect. In the conduct of the war itself several disagreements arose, in some of which, as in the wording of the manifesto of October, 1793, the plan of recovering Prussian aid by territorial concessions in 1796 and 1797, and the difficulties placed in the way of Malmesbury's two negotiations, Grenville's influence was predominant, while in others, as in the first Prussian subsidy of 1793 and the purpose to renew it in 1794, as well as in the genuine offers of peace made to France, Pitt displayed his personal desires and attempted to execute them in spite of

Grenville's objections. But it is to be noted that, taken as a whole, Grenville's war policy was that which England followed. This involved two main ideas: first, to maintain coalitions against France in order to reduce French influence and to restore the balance of power in Europe; second, to seek English colonial expansion as a compensation for the continental aggrandizement of France. These two points are customarily stated as the essentials of Pitt's own policy, when in fact Pitt, in his desire to secure peace at almost any price, would in 1796 have sacrificed the first entire, and in 1797 was ready to yield all but the shadow of the second. Canning's estimate of the struggle between Cabinet factions and his statement of the ascendancy of Grenville\* sustains the impression which is created by a study of the Dropmore manuscripts. Pitt, after 1797, heartily accepted Grenville's war policy, but it was due to Grenville rather than to Pitt that in the earlier years of the conflict England assumed and persevered in that line of conduct which later rose to the dignity of a national principle.

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\* See ante, p. 60.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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The references cited in the body of the work are here arranged in alphabetical order under the subtitle used in the foot-notes. The principal source is the new collection of letters known as the "Dropmore Manuscripts." Whenever possible, all other references have been tested by it.

In a study having for its main object the personal relations and influence of two men it was inevitable that the memoirs of contemporaries should be used largely. The caution with which such sources must be cited has been kept constantly in mind, and they have been cited only in cases where comparison with the Dropmore Manuscripts proves the credibility of the incidents stated, or where the citations serve to bring out the personal attitude or impression of the writers. The secondary authorities have been used merely either to authenticate well-established incidents essential to a logical statement of events or as supplementary proof.

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William Eden, afterward Lord Auckland, was on a diplomatic mission in Paris from 1785 to 1788 and represented England at The Hague from 1790 to 1793. His correspondence is therefore important for the formation of the Triple Alliance of 1788, for the Russian armament of 1791, and for the events leading up to and including the outbreak of war in 1793.

BAILLEU. *Preussen und Frankreich von 1795 bis 1807.* Diplomatische Correspondenzen, herausgegeben von Paul Bailleu. 2 vols. Leipzig: 1881-1887.

BARRAS. *Memoirs of Barras.* Edited by George Duruy. 4 vols. New York: 1895-1896.

The compilation of these memoirs, long after the events treated, renders them of doubtful service, and they have been used here only as supplementary evidence.

BOURGOING. *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe pendant la révolution française.* Par François de Bourgoing. 4 vols. Paris: 1865-1886.

Bourgoing is now considered an antiquated work, but well-authenticated data are sometimes found in it not elsewhere cited. His sources were limited as compared with those at the service of more recent historians.

BURGES. *Selections from the letters and correspondence of Sir James Bland Burges.* Edited by James Hutton. London: 1885.

Burges was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs under both Leeds and Grenville. His letters are especially important for the change of English policy in 1791, which brought about the resignation of Leeds and the advancement of Grenville, but they have been so edited as to furnish a readable book rather than a valuable historical source, and extracts of correspondence must therefore be checked from other works.

BURKE'S WORKS. *The works of Edmund Burke*. Bohn edition. 6 vols. London: 1868.

CHARLEMONT MSS.

Vol. I. *British Historical Manuscripts Commission*. Twelfth Report. Appendix, Part X.

Vol. II. *British Historical Manuscripts Commission*. Thirteenth Report. Appendix, Part VIII.

The first volume covers the period from 1745 to 1783, while the second extends to 1799. The Earl of Charlemont's letters cover a wide range of subjects, but are chiefly literary and political, while his correspondents included many of the most distinguished men of his time. These volumes are mainly valuable in the present study for the side-lights thrown on men and events and in the description of conditions and parties in Ireland during the earlier years of the French Revolution. This latter consideration is of importance in a study of Cabinet difficulties in England.

COURT AND CABINETS. *Memoirs of the court and cabinets of George III.* By the Duke of Buckingham. 4 vols. London: 1853-1855.

Consists almost wholly of letters between Grenville and his brother, the Duke of Buckingham. These are of great value as frequently indicating Grenville's real opinion and purpose, where official letters are expressed in more guarded language.

CROKER. *The correspondence and diaries of the late Right Honourable John Wilson Croker*. Edited by Louis J. Jennings. 2 vols. New York: 1884.

After his retirement from active political life, Croker was much given to collecting from men of prominence narratives of obscure incidents in the diplomatic history of the French Revolution. A few of these have been cited in the study as supplementary evidence.

DEBRET. *A collection of state papers relative to the war against France*. 11 vols., first edition. Published at London from 1794 to 1802.

This collection was issued as a private enterprise, and contains many documents not elsewhere obtainable, together with many private letters from the scene of war. The documents cannot be taken as authoritative without comparison with official sources, some wholly fictitious pieces being included. Some of these very fictitious pieces are, however, important, as explaining references in memoirs and letters by men who drew their information from Debrett.

———. *The despatches of Earl Gower*. June, 1790, to August, 1792. Edited by Oscar Browning. 1 vol. Cambridge, England: 1885.

Earl Gower was the English representative at Paris in the period indicated. His despatches are therefore valuable in a study of the events leading to war, and have also been used in connection with the Nootka Sound controversy.

DROPMORE. Volume I. *British Historical Manuscripts Commission*. Thirteenth Report. Appendix, Part III.

Volume II. *British Historical Manuscripts Commission*. Fourteenth Report. Appendix, Part V.

Volume III. *British Historical Manuscripts Commission*. Fifteenth Report. "J. B. Fortescue MSS., III."

The collection appears as a "Report on the Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue, Esq., preserved at Dropmore." It contains principally the private and secret letters passing between Grenville and diplomatic agents at foreign courts, letters between Grenville and Pitt on government questions, and letters between Grenville and George III. Very few of these have been previously published, and all of them are of the greatest importance in a study of English diplomacy during the period covered. Volume I, published in 1892, covers the period from 1698 to 1790 and is chiefly concerned with the affairs of Thomas Pitt, governor of Madras, though it contains the first part of the Grenville letters. Volume II appeared in 1895 and carries the correspondence up to 1795, while in volume III, published in 1899, these letters are continued to December 31, 1797. As the report numbers and titles of the publications follow no uniform system, the references here given are to volume and page of the subtitle used, "The Dropmore Manuscripts."



ELLIOT. *Life and letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot*. 3 vols. London : 1874.

Elliot's importance in this study lies in his relations with Burke and with Portland and in his service in Corsica as governor of that island. His observations on public men were usually shrewd and his comments illuminating, while his attitude on Pitt's peace negotiations is important, since he entered the service of the government because of his belief in the necessity of combating the French Revolution.

GUSTAVE III. *Collection des écrits politiques, littéraires et dramatiques de Gustave III*. 5 vols. Stockholm : 1804-1805.

This is of value in connection with the relations of Sweden and the Triple Alliance of 1788 and again in 1791. The more interesting relations of Gustavus III and the court of France have no bearing in this study.

———. *History of the late revolution in the Dutch Republic*. Anonymous. London : 1789.

A résumé written by George Ellis immediately after the events leading up to the Triple Alliance of 1788. Ellis was long the confidential friend of Harris, afterward Earl of Malmesbury, and accompanied him on many of his diplomatic missions. This account is the best, from the English point of view, of the public causes of the revolution in Holland.

KEITH. *Memoirs and correspondence of Sir Robert Murray Keith*. 2 vols. London : 1849.

Keith represented England at Vienna at the time of the Russian armament of 1791 and was one of the negotiators of the Austrian-Turkish peace of Sistovo. His letters are valuable in connection with the resignation of Leeds, the involved diplomacy of Leopold II, and also for his intimate acquaintance with Ewart, the English representative at Berlin, revealing the latter's disgust with Grenville's diplomacy.

KOCH. *Histoire abrégée des traités de paix*. Par C. G. de Koch et M. S. F. Schoell. 15 vols. Paris : 1817-1818.

LECKY. *A history of England in the eighteenth century*. By William E. H. Lecky. 8 vols. New York : 1878-1890.

LEEDS. *The political memoranda of Francis, Fifth Duke of Leeds*. Edited by Oscar Browning. Camden Society, 2d series, vol. 35, 1884.

MALMESBURY. *Diaries and correspondence of James Harris, first Earl of Malmesbury*. 4 vols. London : 1844.

Malmesbury was Pitt's favorite agent in diplomacy from 1788 to 1797. These volumes are especially important in this study in connection with the Triple Alliance of 1788, the Prussian subsidy of 1793-1794, the attempt to recover Prussian aid in 1795, the peace negotiations at Paris in 1796, and those at Lille in 1797. The correspondence in Malmesbury is published in the form of extracts, thus somewhat lessening its value as a source and rendering it impossible to rely upon it alone. Most of Malmesbury's letters and despatches to England may, however, be checked word for word by reference to the Dropmore Manuscripts or to the *Parliamentary History*, and this has been done in every important instance. Very few cases of important difference have been found, and where found these have been pointed out in the foot-notes. In general it may be said that Malmesbury as a source has been taken by historians too much at his face value, insufficient care having been taken to discover his exact and often hidden meaning. He was by habit diplomatically indirect, even in his most intimate letters.

MARET. *Maret, Duc de Bassano*. Par Baron Ernouf. 1 volume edition. Paris : 1878.

A superficial monograph, used in this study only as supplementary proof in connection with Maret's part in the negotiations at Lille.

MASSON. *Le département des affaires étrangères pendant la Révolution, 1787-1804*. Par Frédéric Masson. Paris : 1877.

Useful for exact dates and well-established facts, as well as for general estimates of French diplomats.

MILES. *The correspondence of W. A. Miles on the French Revolution, 1789-1817.* Edited by C. P. Miles. 2 vols. London: 1890.

Miles's importance lies in his secret use by Pitt in the Nootka Sound controversy of 1790, and his enthusiasm for the French Revolution. This enthusiasm made him desirous of peace with France, and constituted him an influence upon Pitt in that direction. Miles held no official position, but was an influential publicist, though not always a correct exponent of public opinion.

MORRIS. *The diary and letters of Gouverneur Morris.* Edited by Anne Cary Morris. 2 vols. New York: 1888.

These letters, written from Paris in the earlier years of the French Revolution, and later from various European courts, furnish brilliant descriptions of contemporary men and events. They are not wholly trustworthy, for Morris had a vivid imagination; but in this study Morris plays an important though brief part as confidential adviser and agent of Grenville in the latter's effort to secure a Prussian alliance in 1796.

OSCAR BROWNING. "England and France in 1793." By Oscar Browning. *Fortnightly Review*. February, 1883.

A critical examination of the diplomatic incidents preceding the French declaration of war, based on the documents in the English archives.

PARL. HIST. *The Parliamentary history of England from the earliest period to the year 1803.* 36 vols. London: 1806-1820.

RECORDS AUSTRIA. 49. *Volume 49 of British Foreign Office Records for Austria.*

The Records themselves being inaccessible, no use of them has been attempted in general, and in fact the letters given in Dropmore amply supply the necessary information for a purely personal study of the relations of Pitt and Grenville. But in one instance the references in the letters were so blind as to require a transcript of the actual instructions. This was in the case of Hammond's mission to Vienna and Berlin in 1797.

ROSE. *Diaries and correspondence of the Hon. George Rose.* 2 vols. London: 1860.

Rose acted for many years as Pitt's confidential secretary, but the inexactness with which his papers have been edited greatly limits their usefulness. Dates are frequently lacking and the letters are usually merely extracts. Rose has therefore been used in this study only as supplementary evidence.

SCHLOSSER. *History of the eighteenth century.* By F. C. Schlosser. Translated by D. Davison. 8 vols. London: 1843-1852.

Schlosser is violently anti-British and his sources are limited, but he is of value in depicting conditions in the minor German states.

SMITH MSS. *British Historical Manuscripts Commission.* Twelfth Report. Appendix, Part IX.

The notes and letters comprised in this brief collection consist of the papers of Joseph Smith, at one time private secretary to Pitt. They are of value in elucidating Pitt's secret diplomacy in the case of Nootka Sound, and in the steps leading to Malmesbury's peace mission of 1796.

SOREL. *L'Europe et la révolution française.* Par Albert Sorel. 5 vols. Paris: 1885-1903.

Sorel is justly regarded as the great authority on the diplomacy of Europe during the French Revolution. In this study, however, he has been cited only in support of statements of fact in non-English diplomacy, for his knowledge of English documents is apparently very limited. In many cases, where he is guilty of absolute error in his statement of English purposes and acts, it has been thought worth while to prove that error in the foot-notes. And in general the entire thesis maintained by Sorel in regard to the relations of England and France in 1796 and 1797 is denied by the conclusions reached in this study.

SPARKS. *The life of Gouverneur Morris*. By Jared Sparks. 3 vols. Boston : 1832.  
Contains some letters between Morris and Grenville not given either in the Dropmore Manuscripts or in Morris's *Diaries*.

STANHOPE. *Life of the Right Honourable William Pitt*. By Earl Stanhope. 4 vols. London : 1861-1862.  
The best long biography of Pitt with much intimate knowledge of men and events.

SYBEL. *Histoire de l'Europe pendant la révolution française*. Par H. de Sybel, Traduit par Marie Dosquet. 6 vols. Paris : 1869-1887.

WICKHAM. *The correspondence of the Right Hon. William Wickham*. From the year 1794. 2 vols. London : 1870.

Wickham was for several years Grenville's most trusted agent in Switzerland, and foremost in intrigues with the Royalists of France. His importance in this study is in connection with the various peace proposals, in showing Grenville's energy in war, and in uniting the threads of English and Austrian diplomacy.











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